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A PASSION FLOWER IN THE MUSEUM BUILDING

Considerations for the Conservation of a
Performance Artwork with a Material Component

Mira Dolk

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Mira Dolk

Supervisor: Stavroula Golfomitsou

Degree project for Bachelor of Science with a major in Conservation

UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG
Department of Conservation
P.O. Box 130
SE-405 30 Göteborg, Sweden

<http://www.conservation.gu.se>
Fax +46 31 786 4703
Tel +46 31 786 0000

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By: Mira Dolk
Mentor: Stavroula Golfomitsou

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ABSTRACT

The thesis investigates and discusses performance art within a museum context and from a conservator's perspective. It is done by the case study of a performance artwork entitled *The Passion Flower*, created by the Swedish artist Ingela Ihrman in 2017. The artwork consists of a performance where the performer is wearing a hand made costume representing a passionflower, interacting with an audience. The Museum of Modern Art in Stockholm acquired the artwork in 2019. The acquisition included both the material component of the costume as well as the right and possibility of reactivating the performance. The study present questions on how conservators should approach such a work and what conservation strategy that can be formulated for *The Passion Flower*. By studying literature on conservation of contemporary art, performance art, and performance art within a museum context, a theoretical framework is formulated. From the theory it is argued that the conservation of performance art mainly consist of documentation and reactivation of the "live" act. The study of *The Passion Flower* is both based on the examination of the costume and video documentation of the performance, as well as an extensive interview with the artist Ingela Ihrman. The examination of the costume and the video documentation revealed that when the performance happens, the costume will rapidly deteriorate as it is made of fast degrading materials and is exposed to physical forces by the interaction with the people in the audience. The artist interview gave seminal information about the artwork as well as the artist opinions on deterioration and conservation of the costume. By considering the many parameters of the work and the interrelationship between the costume and the performance, two different conservation strategies are presented depending on how the artwork will be displayed within the museum building.

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Preface

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The Museum of Modern Art in Stockholm has recently acquired an artwork with the title *The Passion Flower*. At the website of the Swedish artist Ingela Ihrman (b.1985), *The Passion Flower* is described as a performance and installation with passion flower costume (Ihrman n.d.). The performance is staging the bud, bloom, and pollination of a passion flower and the audience is invited to suck 'nectar' from its interior (ibid.). The costume is made of various materials such as textile, flour, plastics, wood, paint, soft drink, and straws.

At the start, when the artwork entered the conservation department at the museum, it was not totally clear what the artwork consisted of, and what responsibilities the conservator was going to have in relation to this work. An opportunity to investigate this suddenly emerged.

Performance art addresses interesting and often challenging conservation questions to museum professionals. Yet, this is a relatively unexplored area as these artworks quite recently started to be acquired by museums, including the right and possibility to activate them as “live” performances (Laurenson & Van Saaze 2014, p. 27). In the past, museums have been collecting only the material remains, such as photographs or video recordings of performance art, and not the “live” act itself (ibid.). *The Passion Flower* is especially interesting as it is a performance artwork that both include material and immaterial components. It can be exhibited as a performance but can also be a sculpture or an installation. Conservation of such work might demand a broadened perspective on established conservation praxis as well as considerations of the acquisition, the presentation and maintenance of it. What new areas of responsibilities will arise when these types of artworks are acquired into museum collections?

1.2 Problem Statement

When the costume in the artwork *The Passion Flower* is activated during a performance, the interacting session with the audience, as well as the handling of the costume by the performer, will have a considerable physical impact on the object. As the costume is made of materials and with techniques that are less durable, this could, in combination with the physical stress that will arise during the interaction, cause instant breakage and visible deterioration of the costume components. Due to established conservation guidelines and ethical codes for museum professionals, it is the conservator's responsibility to secure an art object from these types of damages (ICOM 2017, Sec 2.3, 2.24). At the same time, it would be against the same guidelines and codes to let these consequences stand in the way of the artworks integrity, that in contemporary art conservation is both linked to the artist intent and the original appearance of an artwork (Wharton 2006, p. 164).

However, conservation of contemporary art challenges several issues related to traditional conservation. In the case of performance art, the original material of the costume might be secondary to the overall concept of the performance. Therefore, the conservator should question: If the costume is acquired as part of a performance, are the material values in lower priority than the non-material

aspects such as the performance? Can parts of the costume be replaced if damaged, and how can this be done while staying true to the artist's original intent? What is the role of the artist, the conservator and the museum when it comes to future display of the artwork?

1.3 Research Questions

- What is the relationship between the performance and the costume in the artwork *The Passion Flower*?
- What practical and ethical questions should be considered when developing a conservation strategy for *The Passion Flower*?
- What is the role of the conservator in relation to performance art that includes material parts?

1.4 Purpose and Aims

The purpose is to investigate and discuss theoretical and practical questions in terms of conservation and preservation addressed by the performance-based artwork *The Passion Flower*.

The aim is to produce a document that can be used as a basis for decision-making when working out a conservation plan for the artwork. The aim is also to contribute with knowledge about conservation and preservation of performance-based art that might include material and immaterial components to the current development of the field of conservation of contemporary art.

1.5 Limitations

The thesis will focus on a museum context. The artwork has not been possible to study in its wholeness, as the last time the live performance was conducted was in 2018. The costume and video documentation of the performance were made available for examination.

The examination and documentation of the costume is made as an initial overview of the materials and techniques used and it was done without any scientific analysis under COVID19 restrictions. The collected information about the artist and the artwork, including the material from an artist interview, focus on the concept of *The Passion Flower*, how it should forth live within the museum context, and materials and their potential deterioration in relation to the activation by the performance. It does not include information about other artworks made by the artist. Due to the pandemic of COVID19, a live artist interview was not possible to realize, therefore an online conference tool was chosen and the interview was conducted online. The theoretical approach as well as art references will be limited to European and North American theory and art history.

1.6 Methodology

The methodology of the thesis is a combination of literature research, examination and documentation of the artwork and an artist interview. The study focused both on research and examination of *The Passion Flower* and on current theory related to conservation of performance art.

1.7 Research and Knowledge base

The conservation of contemporary art is a well-established discipline among the other specializations within the field. For instance, The International Council for Museums Committee for Conservation (ICOM-CC) has a working group for modern materials and contemporary art along with the more traditional categories such as textiles, paintings and metals. Today, the knowledge and research about contemporary art conservation is comprehensive, but naturally, still under an on-going development.

The emerge of the conservation of contemporary art that we know today started during the 1980s but it was during the 1990s that the most seminal and important projects were realized (Marçal 2019). The first conferences about conservation of contemporary art were held during the 1990s and played an important role for the field (Marçal 2019). “*Modern Art: Who Cares?*” launched by the Foundation For the Conservation of Modern Art, (SBMK) and the Netherlands Institute for Cultural heritage (ICN) in Amsterdam 1997 and “*Mortality Immortality?*” by the Getty Conservation Institute (GCI) in Los Angeles 1998, made a starting point for the development as they positioned and legitimized the contemporary art conservation (Marçal 2019). These conferences played an important role for future projects (ibid). For instance, the “*Modern Art: Who cares?*” project formed the basis for the foundation of the International Network of the Conservation of Contemporary Art (INCCA) that has become an important organisation with over 2400 members, dedicated to the knowledge development of contemporary art conservation (INCCA n.d.). The INCCA website is a great source of published research and publications and their members can take part of other members work, such as artist interviews and, condition reports and installation guides (ibid.).

One of the first research projects focusing on time-based media and performance art was the “*Variable Media Initiative*”, started in 1999 by Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York (Marçal 2019). In 2003, “*The Variable Media Network*” emerged in Montreal, which together with the “*Initiative*” proposed a framework for describing the behaviours of contemporary art with terms such as “installed”, “interactive” and “performed” that are still valid and useful (ibid.).

Important for the later development of the field are inter-institutional projects such as “*Matters in Media Art*”, between the Museum of Modern Art in New York (MoMA), The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA) and Tate Museums (ibid.).

“*Matters in Media Art*” led to the seminal case study driven project called “*Inside Installations: Preservation and Presentation of Installation art*” in 2004-2007 (INCCA n.d.). This was an extensive collaboration project with over 25 represented museums that resulted in the valuable *publication* “*Inside Installations: Theory and Practice in the Care of Complex Artworks*”, published in 2011 (ibid.).

The international “*Network for Conservation of Contemporary Art Research*” (NeCCAR) that was run in 2012-2014 and funded by The Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) is also an interesting project which aimed for developing training curriculum on the theory, methodology and ethics of contemporary art conservation (Tate n.d.). One important outcome of this project was the conference “*Authenticity in Transition: Changing Practices in Contemporary Art Making and Conservation*” in 2014 that resulted in a publication with the same name in 2016 (ibid.).

Tate museum is an important institution for the knowledge production of the conservation of performance art. With the growing number of performance artworks in the collection, the museum has established a research project with the aim to develop an approach to the documentation and conservation of performance-based artworks; “*Documentation and Conservation of Performance*” during the period 2016-2021 (Tate n.d.). This project built on the output of the network “*Collecting the Performative*” between 2012-2014 (ibid.). One important outcome of these projects is the development of the “*Strategy for the Documentation and Conservation of Performance*” that now serves as a working tool for the conservators at Tate in their daily work with the conservation and documentation of performance art (Tate n.d.).

Important texts for this thesis on the conservation of contemporary art has been Glenn Wharton’s writings such as “*The Challenges of Conserving Contemporary Art*”(2013), “*Reconfiguring Contemporary Art in the Museum*”(2016) and “*Bespoke Ethics and Moral Casuistry in the Conservation of Contemporary Art*” (2018), as well as Renee Van de Valls article “*Towards a Theory and Ethics for the Conservation of Contemporary Art*”(2009).

Seminal texts in relation to the conservation of performance art has been “*Collecting Performance-based Art: New Challenges and Shifting Perspectives*” by Pip Laurenson and Vivian Van Saaze (2014) and “*Developing a strategy for the conservation of performance-based artworks at Tate*” by Louise Lawson, Acatia Finbow and Hélia Marçal (2019). Marçal also writes about the development of conservation of contemporary art and how the field now develops towards new approaches for time-based media and performance art in her important article “*Contemporary Art Conservation*” from 2019.

1.8 Ethical Considerations

Research involving human subjects is a particularly sensitive area and several steps need to be taken to ensure that the aims of the project are clear and how the information will be used. Proper care was taken prior and during the interview to ensure that the artist was aware of the aims of the thesis. Permission was taken by the artist and informants to use the interviews and photographs for the dissertation.

1.9 Definitions

Conservation

In this thesis, the term *conservation* refers to a broad description of all activities that strive for the maintenance of cultural heritage objects, including terms such as *preservation* and *restoration* (Muñoz Viñas 2005, p.14).

Preservation

The term *preservation* will be used in a narrower definition. Preservation means the striving for a maintenance of the object in its present form, without any further deterioration (Caple 2000, p.33). This is an activity that often includes preventive conservation (ibid).

Preventive Conservation

Preventive conservation is an activity that aims to preserve the object in its physical and chemical form to prevent further decay and damages (Caple 2000, p.37). This can include activities such as legal protection, environmental control and risk assessments (Caple 2000, p.152).

Interventive, or Active Conservation

Interventive or *Active* conservation means a chemical and/or physical intervention to the object (Caple 2000, p.38).

Restoration

In a general and broad sense, this term means to return an object into a former state (Muñoz Viñas, p.17)

Contemporary Art

This thesis will refer to *Contemporary* art as art of the present day and of the relatively recent past, or art that are of an innovatory nature (Tate n.d.).

Traditional Art

This thesis will often refer to *traditional* art as a general description of art that is not contemporary. This means art in categories such as paintings, sculpture, works on paper, textile, and so on, that do not fall under the previous definition of contemporary art.

Ephemeral

Ephemeral means that something is short-lived and will not exist for a longer period of time (Nationalencyklopedin n.d.).

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Cultural Background

2.1.1 Performance Art

Performance art cannot be captured by a single definition, as performance can be many different things in the context of contemporary art. The Swedish performance artist Catti Brandelius¹ describes what performance art means to her:

”Art comes to life in the viewers eye. If you are a painter you will not be there when it happens. But when you do performance art you are both the object and the creator and you will be there to experience that magic moment.”

The art historian RoseLee Goldberg (2001) traces the roots of western culture performance art back to the movements of the Russian Futurists, Constructivists and Dadaists in the beginning of the 20th century but emphasizes that it was not until the 1970s that performance art became commonly accepted as a medium of artistic expression in its own right (Goldberg 2001, pp. 7-9). In the late 1960s, when conceptual art was developed, the idea or the concept constituted the essential material of the artwork (LeWitt 1967, pp.79-83). Conceptual art questioned the traditional expressions of the art object and the commercialized art world structure as well as reflecting on socio-political dimensions (Tate: Art Terms: Conceptual Art, n.d.). Performance art became an extension of this idea as being intangible, and at that moment, impossible to buy and sell as artists materialized conceptual ideas by their bodies (Goldberg 2001, pp.152-153).

Nowadays artists use a variety of methods, if not inventing totally new ways of expressions. Some artists might work exclusively with performance while others use several different media or materials when building their artistic practices, including performance art.

There are different opinions about what the concept of performance art stands for. Depending on position and context, the perspective on ephemerality seems to vary. During the 1990s, a debate on the ontology of performance art was raised within the field of performance studies, as a reaction on a rapidly growing “materialization” of performance art into video, photographs and installations that emerged during the 1980s, and that also resulted in museum acquisitions of representational artefacts (Lawson et al 2019, p. 2). The main concerns were directed towards the objectification of the “live” moment in performance art and emphasized that performance art is uncollectable (Laurenson & Van Saaze 2014, p.33). Theorists Peggy Phelan had a significant voice in this debate (Laurenson & Van Saaze 2014, pp.31-32). Phelan (1993) stated that the true expression of performance art could only exist in the live act, in the present, and that anything trying to capture that moment such as recording or documentation will fail, or at least, become into something totally different (Phelan 1993, p.146).

¹ Swedish performance artist Catti Brandelius, (b.1971), oral communication 28th may 2020.

She argued that the reproduction of performance lessens its own ontology (ibid.). The aspect of ephemerality was expressed by the words; “Performance’s being,[...] becomes itself through disappearance” (ibid.). Museums that have an interest in acquiring performance art to their collections might have another opinion than the words of Phelan. An example is the Tate in the U.K., that defines performance art as “Artworks that are created through actions performed by the artist or other participants, which may be live or recorded, spontaneous or scripted”(Tate Art Terms Performance art n.d.).

Laurenson & Van Saaze (2014) argues that Phelan’s thoughts on performance art is no longer applicable on all performance artworks as some contemporary artists has made conscious choices so that their artworks can be independently reactivated without the artist presence (Laurenson & Van Saaze 2014, p.32).

Helia Marçal (2017) describes performance art as non-repeatable ephemeral events, specific in time and space, “[...] which remain only in the memories of those who experienced them and/or in documents, ultimately becoming a trace of past experience” (Marçal 2017, p.116).

2.1.2 Performance Art and the Museum

Laurenson & Van Saaze (2014) explains that it was not until the beginning of the 2000s that museums started to collect performance art in terms of acquiring the whole concept of the artwork with the right of reactivation (Laurenson & Van Saaze 2014, p. 27). In the past, museums considered performance art as uncollectible, and *if* a museum acquired anything in relation to a performance artwork, it was the material remains of it and never the performance action itself (ibid.). Laurenson & Van Saaze (2014) suggests two main reasons for this previous approach (Laurenson & Van Saaze 2014, pp. 28-30). Firstly, the intangible key features of performance art and its ability to contradict institutionalization and the economic aspect of the market and trading of art, and secondly, the institutional agreements that museums, market and conservation practices are bound to material and durable objects (ibid.).

The first performance artwork to be acquired at Tate, by the means of purchasing the possibility to reactivate the “live” action, was *Good Feelings in Good Times* by Roman Ondák (b.1966), made in 2003, and acquired in 2005 (Laurenson & Van Saaze 2014, p.34). The artwork consists of an artificially created queue of seven to twelve people that take place within an exhibition context (Epps 2016). The artist has given instructions on how the artwork should be reactivated (ibid.).

Today, museums have started to collect performances not by their material remains, but as performance “live” artworks. This has to do with the fact that contemporary artists challenge, deconstruct and reformulates the art concept, and thereby the traditional notion of museum objects as being material, durable and portable. Within current practices, artists allow performance artworks to be collectable as they incorporate reactivation possibilities within their artworks. In the case of *Good Feelings in Good Times* by Ondák, the design of the artwork in combination with the given instructions for activating it, have made the work durable and repeatable, although its artistic qualities are non-material (Laurenson & Van Saaze 2014, pp. 27-34).

2.1.3 Restaging, Reactivation, Reinstallation

The terms restaging, reactivation, and reinstallation refer both to an activity within the artistic practices of performance artist as well as methods used by museum professionals to present and display performance art. According to the glossary of terms found in the *Decision-Making Model for Contemporary Art Conservation and Presentation* (2019), restaging, reactivation, and reinstallation are the presentation of an artwork that once have been performed in the past (Cologne Institute of Conservation Sciences & Technology Arts Sciences TH Köln 2019, p. 26). It is often a reconfiguration as the artwork is put in relation to new spatial and contextual parameters (ibid.). The model claims that the presentation relies on the artworks available material that could be documentation of the artist intent, exhibition documentation and testimonies (ibid.).

Hanna Hölling (2011) states that restaging of performances is an activity that has become a common practice among contemporary artists. For example, Marina Abramović restages her own performances. The same goes for other artists with their earlier works (Hölling 2011, pp. 2-3). In the exhibition *Seven Easy Pieces* at Solomon R. Guggenheim museum in New York in 2005, Abramović restaged historically important performance artworks from the 1960s and 1970s, originally made by her colleagues Valie Export, Gina Pane, Vito Acconci, Joseph Beuys and Bruce Nauman (Hölling 2011, p. 2). Hölling (2011) points out that the notion of restaging, reactivation, and reinstallation changes the understanding of performance art as exclusively limited to a single moment in time (Hölling 2011, p.2).

2.1.4 Material Components in Performance Art

Performance art can include and be dependent on the presence of material components as well as being totally immaterial. The number of variations of how and what kind of material objects that are used in performance artworks are as many as there are artistic practices.

An early example of a material component in a performance artwork is the costume that Dadaist Hugo Ball (b. 1886-1927) was wearing when he recited his sound poem *Karawane* from 1916 (Goldberg 2001 pp.60-61). Ball made the costume out of cardboard and writes about it in his diary from the same year (ibid.) He describes the visual appearance and movements of the costume on his body; 'I looked like an obelisk and had to be carried onto the stage in the dark' (ibid).

A contemporary example is the artwork *Stop, Repair, Prepare: Variations on Ode to Joy for a Prepared Piano, No.1*, made in 2008 by Jennifer Allora (b.1974) and Guillermo Calzadilla (b.1971) and acquired by the Museum of Modern art in New York (MoMA 2019). The artwork combines sculpture and performance where a musician plays part of Ludwig van Beethoven's Ninth Symphony on a grand piano while standing inside a hole in the instrument, leaning out over the keyboards when playing (ibid.).

Some artists produce material components by themselves that play an integral part of the performance artwork but also exist as art objects on their own. An example is the German artist Rebecca Horn (b.1944) who made a series of wearable sculptures created to extend and enhance the movements of the human body, used during single performances that was recorded on film (Finbow 2018, p. 294). The series of wearable sculptures was acquired by Tate museum during the period of 1999-2009 (ibid.). Horn considered the performances as non-repeatable, and as the objects were no longer activated through performance, the artist treated them as sculptures in relation to a museum context (Finbow 2016, sec. 4).

An example of performances with no material components at all, except the human body are the works of Tino Sehgal (b.1976), whose artworks only rely on choreographed movements and sounds embodied by one or several performers who interact with each other or/and the audience (Van Saaze 2015, p.57). No material documents, pictures or recordings are allowed to exist in relation to his work (ibid.). The immaterial aspect is a crucial component in his practice and on the sale of his work there are no material documents available (ibid.). The ownership only entails the right to reactivate the artwork (ibid.).

2.1.5 Performance Art and its Documents

Hölling (2011) notes that additional to the impossibility of finding a single definition of performance art comes the question of what is left behind when a performance is completed (Hölling 2011, p.2). The derivatives from a performance artwork can be both of immaterial and material kind (ibid.). Müller (2015) argues that these derivatives, or artefacts that she calls them, should be understood as performance documentation (Müller 2015, p. 21).

There has been a debate around documentation in relation to performance art. Peggy Phelan (1999) manifested that any attempt of documenting performance art will fail (Phelan 1999, p. 146). Amelia Jones (1997) claimed in contrary that performance need documentation to manifest its being as an artwork (Jones 1997, pp. 11-18). Philip Auslander (2006) divides documentation into a *documentary* and a *theatrical* category (Auslander 2006, p.1). The *documentary* category represent the “traditional” way where the documentation is meant to capture the “reality”, producing a record from which the event can be reconstructed (ibid.). Documentation of performance art has often been referred to as video recordings or photographs (Müller 2015, p. 26). In the other category, the *theatrical*, Auslander (2006) places artworks that sometimes are called “performed photography”, such as the works of Cindy Sherman (b.1954) who photographs herself in different guises (Auslander 2006, p. 2). These are artworks where the performative act only occurs in front of the camera, and where the spaces of these documents are the only place where the performances occur (ibid.).

However, Müller (2015) argues that documentation of a performance artwork can be constituted by oral or written testimonies, or by materials and media that were created in relation to the artwork (ibid.). Müller (2015) states that these artefacts can have different status, as they sometimes are considered as artworks by themselves (ibid.). The act of giving remains significance as an artwork can

either be made by the artist, but also by the estate (ibid.). This brings questions in relation to authorship and shifts of the artworks intended meaning (ibid.).

An example of a physical remain that has become an artefact or a documentation is the costume made and used by the Norwegian artist Kjartan Slettebakk (b.1932-2008) in 1975. The Museum of Modern Art in Stockholm acquired this costume in 2002 (Moderna Museet n.d.). The artist is wearing the costume, acting as a poodle at different art events in Sweden, among them at the opening of a new exhibition hall for the museum in Malmö (ibid.). At the homepage one can see the costume displayed on a mannequin with a painted mask. The institution writes that the costume is not an ordinary sculpture but a carrier of memories and a document from the performance actions (ibid.).

Müller (2015) conclude that the priority is not to reproduce or reconstruct the performance event as exactly as possible but rather consider these documentation artefacts as a “[...] flexible cluster of manifold “pre- and after-lives” of a live event affiliated to various forms of authorship and intertwined processes of media transfers” (Müller 2015, p.22).

2.2 Conservation Theory of Contemporary Art

2.2.1 Conservation of Contemporary Art

Conservation of contemporary art has since the 1980s positioned to be an independent specialization with the same advocacy as already confirmed working groups within the professional field of conservation (Beerens 2016, p.2).

Conservators work by ethical principles and professional standards that are developed by the field itself (Wharton 2013, p.164). Conservation councils, committees, organizations and institutions are representing these ethics and standards such as the *Code of Ethics* presented by *The international Council of Museums* (ICOM), the *European Confederation of Conservation-Restorers' Organisations* (E.C.C.O.) and Conservation Codes of Ethics for Practices in Canada (CAC; CAPC), The United States (AIC) and the United Kingdom (ICON) (Clavir 2002, p.253).

The conservation of contemporary art relies on these principles but some aspects of today's art cannot be correlated to the conservation strategies for traditional art, and requires therefore specific considerations (Chiantore & Rava 2012, p.15). For example, concepts such as “minimum intervention”, “reversibility” and the strategy to use different materials for interventive conservation than the original material of the object, are key principles that has been developed for, and applied on traditional art (Wharton 2018, p.59). It has to be mentioned that these terms, “reversibility” and “minimum intervention”, have been under debate and are questioned by theoreticians, not at least by the often referred Salvador Muñoz Viñas (2005). Muñoz Viñas (2005) argue that the term reversibility should be used with care and by the notion that reversibility is an unattainable goal as all interventive actions will change the object (Muñoz Viñas 2005, pp.185-188). Muñoz Viñas (2005) also states that the term “minimum intervention” is created by the reflection of this notion as the term would be

unnecessary if there were such thing as totally reversibility (Muñoz Viñas 2005, p. 188). Muñoz Viñas (2005) conclude that “minimum intervention” means different activities for different objects and that both these terms are an out-dated way to deal with inappropriate strategies that was executed in the past (Muñoz Viñas 2005, pp.188-189). However, these terms are at the core of conservation ethics that is widely accepted and remains as useful concepts in relation to the conservation mission (Caple 2006, p. 64).

The established conservation norms connect the “true nature”, or the very essence of an object, to its original materials (Wharton 2006, p.164). In contemporary art, the very essence of an object rather relies on the artist intent and the original appearance of the work (ibid.). Therefore the strategies for contemporary art differs as the conservation process sometimes means preserving the support that allows for the artworks representation, rather than focusing on the preservation of original materials (Chiantore & Rava 2012, p.16). For instance, in relation to conceptual art, the importance of the artwork lies in the artistic idea, or the concept of the artwork, not in the realization/materialization of it (Chiantore & Rava 2012, p.166). This means that it is the idea or the concept of the artwork, rather than the original material that the conservator should strive for preserving (Chiantore & Rava 2012, p. 173). This notion motivates radical treatments such as replacements of original materials as it might be needed for preserving the artistic intent or concept, even though this is an activity that conflict with the established conservation ethics (Wharton 2006, p.167).

Of course, the conservation of contemporary art also includes preserving original materials. One challenge that comes with this activity is all the new materials that are introduced by these artworks (Chiantore & Rava 2012, p. 16). In many cases, the materials of contemporary art are constituted by synthetic composites with complex compositions such as plastics, acrylic paints and materials produced for other purposes than becoming art (Chiantore & Rava 2012, p.74). Comprehensive and rich knowledge about traditional materials, such as oil paintings for instance, and their behaviours over time, has been produced by the conservation profession over the years (Chiantore & Rava 2012, p. 16). Conservators of traditional art can rely on established techniques and methodologies that have been tested and practiced before (ibid.). When it comes to the materials of contemporary art, in many cases there are no knowledge about material changes and behaviours to consult (ibid.). Very often, no information has been produced about how these materials response to environmental conditions and no research about cleaning methods, consolidation or other interventions for inhibiting degradation can be found (ibid.). Therefore, the conservator has to devote time for identifying constituent materials and techniques and gather any details about their alteration over time as well as document and strive for preserving the artist intent (ibid.).

One of the core resources in conservation of contemporary art is that conservators, in many cases, work on objects where the artist is alive. Interviewing artists about their work is a well-established working method used by conservators of contemporary art (Beerkens et al 2012, p.11). By interviewing the artist, conservators can get an insight in the artistic practice and build an understanding of the artist intentions and overall concept of the artwork (Beerkens et al. 2012, pp.14-15). Information can be gathered about the choices of materials and techniques in relation to the concept and to what degree ageing is accepted without changing the meaning of the artwork (ibid.). The information gathered is considered as first-hand source material and is premiered within the field (Beerkens et al 2012, p. 11).

Rivenc et al (2017) state that the information gathered from consulting the artist can have direct impact on conservation decisions, which is something that has been a subject for criticism (Rivenc et al 2017, p. 2). This is because the opinion of the artist might stand in conflict with established conservation ethics, other stakeholders' interests, or with other values that might be of public interest connected to the object (ibid.). Sommermeyer (2011) argues that conservators have to be careful and consider conservation responsibilities versus artist opinion and not rely on artist interviews as the only research tool (Sommermeyer 2011, pp.143-151). They should consider the artworks as the first-hand source of information and work in the way so that the outcome of the interview will *expand* the knowledge and not invent it (ibid.).

Sometimes a conservation treatment reveals inherent values that are connected to an object and which might conflict with each other (Wharton 2013, p. 163).

The *Decision-making model for the Conservation and Restoration of Modern and Contemporary Art* include this aspect of conflicting values (Hummelen & Sillé 1999, pp.164-185). The relationship between material and meaning is often ambiguous and the model points out two moments in the conservation plan process where this relationship has to be investigated and determined (Hummelen & Sillé 1999, pp.164-165). Firstly it has to be determined if there is a contradiction between the physically condition of the artwork and the artworks intended meaning or concept (Hummelen & Sillé 1999, pp.165-166). Secondly, If there is a contradiction, there has to be examined in what ways a conservation intervention would affect the meaning of the artwork (ibid.).

Van de Vall (2009) suggests a case by case approach in the conservation of contemporary art, where the established principles that have been worked out by the conservation profession should not be abandoned but rather used in other ways (Van de Vall 2009, p. 53). She emphasizes that there are no principles that will fit all cases, but that there are principles that can be applied to some of them, and the conservator has to determine what principles are relevant for each individual case (ibid.). One has to be aware that some principles will conflict with each other and that it is therefore important to reveal the judgement of the different values that are present in the case and their relatively importance (ibid.). Finally, the conservator has to accept that conservation decisions sometimes involve painful compromises but that it also can contribute to an enrichment of the artwork and its future life (ibid.).

In relation to longevity and stability in a museum context, artworks such as kinetic art, computer-based art, conceptual art and performance art, introduce new perspectives and might change the expectations on the lifetime of a museum object (Marçal 2019, p.1). Some artists work deliberately by the notion that the technologies, methods or materials they use might become obsolete or degrade very fast (Wharton 2013, p.167). In some artworks, this might even be the core concept, while other artists do not want their artworks to degrade but have unwittingly chosen materials or technologies that are unstable by its nature or will become obsolete (ibid.).

Marçal (2019) notes that the new artistic practices and artworks that are formed by contemporary artists have led to a reformulation of what conservation is and what roles the conservators have (Marçal 2019, p. 6).

2.2.2 Conservation of Performance Artworks

Conservation of performance artworks is a quite recent ambition (Marçal 2017, p. 117). Lawson et al (2019) explains that one reason for this is that museums haven't collected performance artworks in the way they do now (Lawson et al 2019, p. 3). They report from the current situation at Tate museum in UK where the increasing number of performance based artworks to the collection demands new strategies and methods to correspond to what they need in terms of conservation (ibid.).

Marçal (2019) writes about the development of conservation in relation to contemporary art and discusses how to respond to the challenges that artworks in the category of time-based media and performance art arise in relation to the museum context. Marçal (2019) explains that these artworks differ from “traditional” art such as paintings or sculpture as they unfold over time and are dependent on social or technological networks to function (Marçal 2019, p.1).

Laurenson & Van Saaze (2014) state that the authenticity of performance art is linked to the live moment, and that the artwork only exists in the moment of the activation (Laurenson & Van Saaze 2014, p.31). In relation to this, Lawson et al (2019) argue that performance art differs from other artistic expressions in the way that they can oscillate between being *active* and *dormant* and that it is only in the active performance situation where conservators can fully understand the conservation needs (Lawson et al 2019, p.1). By the word *active* it means when the artwork is presented in its “live” state and dormant is when it is not exhibited (Lawson et al 2019, p.9). Similarities in terms of changing states have been found in literature concerning conservation of technology-based installation art which are described as having an *on* and *off* mode where the artwork only exists as a whole in the *on* mode (Bek 2011, p. 206).

Laurenson & Van Saaze (2014) emphasize that the main challenge of collecting and conserving performance art is not the non-material aspect of it (Laurenson & Van Saaze 2014, p.27). The real challenge is how to maintain these artworks within the museum institution (ibid.). Hummelen & Scholte (2004) argues that for ephemeral works of art, documentation is crucial as the information gathered allows for the transmission of the artworks concept and artist intentions, that are essential aspects for the conservation, maintenance, reinstallation and representation (Hummelen & Scholte 2004, p. 212).

Documentation is essential for all conservation practices and is carried out at many levels in conservators working processes (Caple 2000, p.70-71). Marçal & Marcedo (2017) state that there are many different types of documentation produced for different purposes and by different disciplines (Marçal & Marcedo 2017, p.1). Marçal & Marcedo (2017) argues that documentation is a conservation strategy in itself as this process can be considered as a form of a materialised memory which these artworks are dependent on in relation to their future presentations (Marçal & Marcedo 2017, p.1). They suggests that whether documentation is a conservation strategy on itself or a step towards a conservation decision, an initial statement about the conservation context and the aim of the document is fruitful as it alters the way documentation is produced and will give a better understanding of the conservation purposes (Marçal & Marcedo 2017, p.7).

Tate has developed a strategy for the documentation of performance art that will be described in the next chapter. They state that their aim of conserving performance art is to retain the “liveness” of the performance, meaning the ability to activate it in future exhibitions (Tate 2016-21).

2.2.2.1 Tate’s Strategy for the Documentation and Conservation of Performance

Lawson et al (2019) give a review of the developed strategy in their article from 2019. The strategy is implemented as a working method for the conservators at the time-based media department at Tate museum in the UK and is used for each performance artwork that is entering the collection. It aims to build an understanding of all the activities within the museum context that are needed for the artworks maintenance within the museum context. The method is based on three documentation tools; *Performance Specification*, *Activation Report*, and *Map of Interactions*. These are physical templates with questions that the conservator should answer. Additional is a glossary of terms describing the different states of performance artworks, suggesting a common terminology to use by professionals engaged with these aspects (Lawson et al 2019, pp. 8-21).

Glossary of Terms

Within the strategy a list of terms have been formulated by the assumption that performance artworks can exist and oscillate between different states during its lifetime within a museum context. *Activation* is described as the process of preparing the artwork and to present it by its “live” definition. *Installed State* is when the performance is installed but not activated by its performers, *Dormant State* is when the performance is in storage, as there might be material components that are preserved and stored. *Constant* describes the elements that always need to be present for the artwork to function while its opposite is *Flux* describes all elements apart from the performance that will, can and do change. *Interaction* refers to the social aspect of the performance and is considered as an action between two entities that result in change (Lawson et al 2019, p.9).

Performance specification

The performance specification aims to describe the artwork and get an overview of what contexts and requirements are needed for its activation. It is a way to examine not only the work but also its specific relationship with the institution as the context in which the artwork will be presented. The template has one headline where the constant aspects are described and uses questions like “*what decisions must the artist be consulted on? What are the overarching principles of the artwork? And what are the necessary environmental conditions for the installed work?*” are formulated. Physical components are mapped by questions such as “*what objects are needed?*”, what status they do have, if they can be remade for future performances and how perishable they are (Lawson et al 2019, pp. 9-11, 17-19).

The Activation Report

The activation report is a template for capturing the preparations before activation and the following monitoring of the artwork with possibilities to document failures. The headlines are “*Context of activation,*” “*Decision makers*”, “*Evaluation*” and “*Activation details.*” The activation report captures information about all states that the performance can be in, from dormant state to its

activation. The idea is that a new document will be produced during each exhibition, which allows for monitoring changes and creating a biography of the artwork (Lawson et al 2019, pp.10-11).

The Map of Interactions

This is a tool which purpose is to map and understand the network of relationships that exist, both internally and externally, for supporting the museums ability to activate the artwork. This is a way to assess areas of vulnerability around the artwork and to address potential risks that could threaten the activation. The map regards human and non-human actors such as artist, curators, conservators and technology specifications for instance (Lawson et al 2019, pp. 12-14).

2.2.2.2 Reconfiguring Performance Artworks

Wharton (2016) writes about a radical shift that allows contemporary museums to alter earlier artworks into new forms. Ephemeral artworks such as performances, art made of rapidly deteriorating materials or technology that become obsolete are of focus for these transmissions (Wharton 2016, p.27). Together with the artist, curators and conservators work out ways to materialise or reactivate these artworks into more durable forms (ibid.). This action differs from the restaging, reactivation and reinstallation as this method can be seen as an activity that produces “new” artworks rather than presenting already existing ones. Wharton (2016) exemplifies this by the “fixing” of the performance *Abstract Film No.1* from 1967-68 by VALIE EXPORT into an installation at MoMA in New York (Wharton 2016, pp.29-30). In 2010, a curator approached the artist about transforming the performance into an installation that could be acquired by the museum (ibid.). The artwork, which originally consisted of a performance where the artist and her assistants poured different fluids on a mirror while a projector reflected the scenery on a wall, turned into a fixed installation based on the performance and the material components (ibid). The new artwork was acquired to the collection, entitled *Abstract Film No. 1 '1967-1968/2011* (ibid.).

Wharton (2016) points out that this reconfiguring trend is not an easy choice by museums as the act of changing artworks challenges the core values of preservation, authenticity and the artist originally vision (Wharton 2016, pp.28, 35).

3. METHOD

This chapter describes the method for how the artwork *The Passion Flower* has been investigated.

3.1 Research and Literature Review

Research about the artist and her body of work as well as the biography of the artwork were done to collect background information for both an interview with the artist but also as preparations for documentation and examination of the costume. The research consisted by reading published texts online about the artist and her work, taking part of the artist informative website and listening to several audio guides and statements given by the artist in relation to exhibitions.

Literature review focused on written sources about the concepts of conservation of contemporary art, narrowing on subjects such as research on conservation of performance-based and performance-related objects. Literature allowed defining and distinguishing between concepts and terminology related to performance art. Performance art history and theory has been studied. To know the background of performance art and the discussed ontology was considered as important background knowledge in relation to museum collecting, representation, documentation and conservation.

Literature related to materials and their deterioration has been studied to be able to make assumptions about future ageing of the costume and to point out risks.

3.2 Description, Documentation and Examination

The artwork was studied and examined as a whole but it is presented in its two main components; the performance and the costume.

The overview of the performance was allowed by the collected material from the artist interview as well as the video documentation of the performance from two exhibitions; "*The inner Ocean*" at der TANK at the FHNW Academy of Art and Design in Basel in 2017, and from "*The Moderna Exhibition*" in 2018, with the title "*With the future Behind us*" in Stockholm. Both videos has been cut and shortened in time so they do not show the whole performance as it is. One has to be aware that taking part of the documentation of the performance cannot be equated with experiencing the artwork in place. The documentation videos can be seen at;

http://www.ingelaihrman.com/works_passion_flower.html [Viewed: 05-05-20] and

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dmoni5VKos4> [Viewed: 05-05-20].

Related information in the form of requirements needed for the reactivation of the performance was gathered from the artist interview.

The costume was moved from the storage magazine to the sculpture studio at the department of conservation at the Museum of Modern Art in Stockholm where it was examined during two days during the dates 16-17/4-2020. It was shortly examined at one later occasion; 21/4-20. The examination and documentation of the costume focused on the construction and present materials and how the condition of the costume might have been affected by the performances, and will be affected in the future. Documentation was made with camera Sony a6300 with camera lens PZ 16-50/3,5-5,6

OSS. The visual examination was made by the naked eye and with normal and raking light. The artist was interviewed in between the examination occasions. The description is based both on examination as well as information collected from the artist interview.

3.3 Artist Interview

The artist was interviewed about her artwork the Passion Flower on three occasions during the dates 20/4-20 (46.55 min), 21/4-20 (23.13 min) and 8/5-20 (24.26 min). Some questions were asked by email during the date 27/4-20. The interviews were conducted by Zoom that is an online conference tool. Pictures of the artwork were shown during the sessions. The interviews were recorded and transcribed with the artist's permission. The whole interview transcription and the email conversation are attached in Appendix 1. The method for the interview was based on literature dedicated to artist interviews as a contemporary conservation tool as well as the previous documentation and examination of the artwork. Advice was also given by an experienced conservator carrying out artists' interviews.

The main purpose of the interview was to gain information about:

- Intentions of the artworks overall meaning, values and interpretations
- What the museum has acquired, accordingly to the artist
- What requirements and resources are needed in relation to reactivation of the performance including materials and techniques of the costume
- Opinions on conservation of the costume
- Opinions on how the artwork can function and forth live within the museum context

3.4 Informants

Oral communication with responsible conservator and written questions sent by mail to responsible curator and to museum employee has collected information about the artworks significance, acquisition and exhibition.

3.5 Limitations

The artwork was not possible to document in its wholeness and activated state. Video documentation of the performance, found on Internet, and the material costume has been available for the examination that here is presented.

Due to the prevailing pandemic of COVID19 no technical analyses of chemical composition could be made, and therefore, knowledge about the costume's constituent materials of the costume is limited. The overall analyses of the costume focused on how the costume was made and how it is affected by the performance, therefore detailed examination of all materials and their potential deterioration was not possible at this occasion.

4. THE PASSION FLOWER

4.1 The Artist Ingela Ihrman

Ingela Ihrman (b.1985) is a Swedish artist currently based in Malmö. Her artistic practice moves between performance, installations, sculpture, artistic writing, public events and video. She graduated from the Master's degree program in Fine Art at the art university Konstfack in 2012 (Ihrman n.d.).

The first time the artist dressed up as a flower was at preparatory art school (Ihrman 2020). Later, when Ihrman graduated from Konstfack, it was with her master project "*The Giant Water Lily Victoria amazonica BLOOMS*" where she staged the blooming of a giant water lily in a small municipal greenhouse in Kalmar, south of Sweden (Ihrman n.d.). During and since the studies, a series of blooming flower performances has been built up; "*The Queen of the Night cactus flower*" in 2009/2018, "*The Giant Water Lily Victoria amazonica*" in 2012, "*The Giant Corpse Flower*" in 2013 and "*The Passion Flower*" in 2017 (Ihrman n.d.).

By studying the documentation and texts about the blooming performances at the artist website, one can note similarities in practical embodiment and dramaturgy. They all include a handmade flower costume, worn by the performer that has the material technical ability to transform from one state to another. Common are multisensory qualities and interaction with the audience as the performances often include smells or tastes that the viewer can take part of in different ways for each flower that blooms. The framing of the performances often include some other person/s; "botanical experts/hosts" introducing and talking about the flower in front of the audience or assistants helping the flower to bloom.

Ihrman works with various materials and techniques to make costumes, sculptures and installations. The aesthetics of the finished artworks are characterized by tactile craft techniques, amateur theatre, science and "hobbyism" (My Art Guides n.d.). Ihrman describes the process of transforming materials into plants and animals, as problem solving (Kulturreportaget i P1 2019). The materials used are found in commercial stores for building equipment and household utensils, second-hand shops and what she finds in nature (ibid.).

4.2 The Artwork



Figure 1. Photograph from the performance *The Passion Flower* (2017). Performed by the artist Ingela Ihrman during the exhibition “*With the future Behind us*” at the Museum of Modern Art in Stockholm 2018. The flower is pouring passion fruit soda in its interior so that the audience can come and drink. Licence: Moderna Museet

4.2.1 Biography of the Artwork

The artwork was made in 2017 and is part of the multi component project “*The Inner Ocean*” that also include works such as “*A Great Seaweed Day*”, an installation exhibited at the Nordic Pavilion during the Venice Biennale in 2019, and “*SEAWEEEDSBLADET #1*”, a newspaper distributed to 3500 households in the residential area Seved in Malmö where the artist currently lives and work (Ihrman n.d.). The artwork has been exhibited three times (Ihrman 2020).

The first time *The Passion Flower* was exhibited was at the solo exhibition “*The inner Ocean*” at der TANK at the FHNW Academy of Art and Design in Basel in 2017, curated by Chus Martínez (der TANK 2017). The second time was in the solo exhibition “*It's Sweetwater*” at the artist driven exhibition space *Zabriskie Point* in Geneva (*Zabriskie point* n.d.). The third and the last time exhibited before acquisition was at the group exhibition “*The Moderna Exhibition*” in 2018, with the title “*With the future Behind us*”, curated by Joa Ljungberg and Santiago Mostyn, at the Museum of Modern Art in Stockholm (Moderna museet 2018). It was acquired by the Museum of Modern Art in Stockholm in 2019 (Informant 3).

4.2.3 Significance, Interpretation and Values

Ihrman explains that the artwork is part of a series of blooming flower performances, described in chapter 4.1, where each flower is about a certain theme but where the blooming's series, together with the act of dressing up as a flower, doing the transformation in front of an audience is about many things (Ihrman 2020). "Maybe its about how it feels to be an artist, a human, a woman, a body, its about death and puberty, to have desires and a wanting to attract" (ibid.). Ihrman describes that within this context, the theme of *The Passion Flower* is intimacy and attraction, because, as the artist express it "That's what it is dedicated to do" (ibid.).

The artist explains that she wanted to create a feeling of intimacy and a situation where the audience is invited to take a straw to drink, together with the question " is this something that you would like to invite in your life?"(ibid.). The reply could be yes or no, which is another aspect of the artwork, as it also examines the vulnerability of taking the risk of being rejected (ibid.).

Ihrman says that the performance act itself is a social activity (Ihrman 2020). It is a way for her to engage with the uncontrollable chaos she feels that the social is as one does not know what will happen when you engage with other people. The social is something that she cannot control. She describes the interaction with the audience as a situation where she defines the framing by a simple manuscript but beyond that, there is very much that is out of her control. To surrender to not predict what is going to happen is something that is frightening for the artist but in the same way interesting (ibid.).

In the case of how the artist wishes the artwork to be perceived by an audience, vulnerability is central as within all her performances, she exposes herself (Ihrman 2020). It is important that there is a nerve and a feeling of uncertainty; that the act is not to well directed and executed. The artist put value in the visual appearance of the costume and its material technical solutions as these parameters contributes to the overall experience of the performance. The artist describes the costume as looking homemade and low tech, almost amateurish, which together with the presence of assistants might helping it a bit on the road, creates a certain feeling that is important. The performance should not be "waterproof", and the audience might wonder if the flower will manage the opening or not. This is part of the overall experience of the artwork (ibid.).

Informant 1 explains in relation to the acquisition that the artwork was especially interesting to acquire, as it is an artwork on the borderline between performance and sculpture and is therefore a significant artwork for the artist's production. It is also interesting to see the artwork in relation to a performance tradition and other performance related artworks in the collection (Informant 1).

4.3 The Performance

4.3.1 Description of the Performance



Figure 2. A collage of screenshots from the video documentation of the performance at the exhibition "The inner Ocean" at der TANK, in Basel 2017. Licence: Ingela Ihrman

The performance starts with the closed bud of a n enlarged passionflower that is placed directly on the floor in a room with an audience (Fig. 2, (1)). Inside the bud is the artist, the artist is the bud. A blue ribbon strap is holding the leaves together until the artist releases it by reaching out a hand from the inside. When the strap falls of, the sepals and petals unfold and fall to the ground (2). There is a quite large sound when the sepals hit the floor. Assistants help parts of the flower to lie in position. The flower strikes out and the audience can see the flower in its wholeness. After a little while, it/the artist picks up a plastic bottle of yellow soda and pours the soda into a pocket representing the honey gland

at the base of the petals (3). It is only the hands of the performer that is showing, sticking out from two holes in the costume. The audience is invited to take a long straw that is handed out by assistants, and come forward to the flower to taste the soda (4,5). The performance ends when the flower has “bloomed out”, and the artist is stepping out of the pistil, leaving the exhausted flower on the floor (6). The duration of the performance is about 15-30 minutes.

4.3.2 Who can do the Performance?

Only the artist has done the performance so far but during the artist interview it was clarified that another person can do the performance if the artist does not want to do it anymore (Ihrman 2020). Some aspects are important for the artist in relation to the transmission of how the performance should be done. The person who will do the performance has to have knowledge of what the artwork is about. The person should go into the performance with insight and be able to relate to the artwork in their own way. Written instructions, oral communication, documentation videos and pictures are all allowed methods for transmission of information. When the museum wants to reactivate the performance, the artist wishes to be asked firstly if she wants to do it (ibid.).

4.3.3 Light, Space and Audience

During the artist interview, questions about the context of the performance were asked and instructions about light, space and audience were given. The performance is dependent on a present audience, as the artist considers this as one of the most important aspects of the artwork (Ihrman 2020). The performance should take place inside a building of any kind; the location could be a living room or some other place where one can expect a potted plant. It should not be performed in an outdoor environment and not in adjacent to any real living plants or leaves. The light should be bright in the room as if it were in the middle of the day (ibid.).

4.3.4 Props

Beyond the costume, props in terms of plastic bottles of passion fruit soda, straws and a balloon are needed for the performance to work accordingly to the artist's intentions (Ihrman 2020). The artist uses three 1,5 litre bottles of passion fruit or any other “tropical” fruit soda that is common in the shops located where the performance takes place. It is important that the audience can see the label and the moment when the cap is unscrewed so that they dare to taste. The straws should be white and about 50 cm long, preferably made of paper. In addition to this is a balloon that the performer will use inside the costume to keep the top part balancing at the head (ibid.).

4.3.5 Assistants

The performer needs assistance before, during, and after the performance. The artist wrote instructions for the assistants for the exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in Stockholm in 2018, see Appendix 3. Informant 2 wrote a witness report from the performance;

“The assistants helped the artist to prepare the costume before the performance and helped her to get inside. Thereafter they placed the soda bottles inside the stamen, and closed the flower into a bud with the help of a blue ribbon that the artist later on could open from the inside. When so the flower had stroked out, they arranged the petals, sepals and corona filament due to instructions from the artist. During the performance they informed the audience to move carefully and not step onto the sepals and petals. After the artist had poured the soda, they handed out straws to the audience. When the performance was finished, they helped the artist to get out from the costume and mounted a cardboard tube inside the operculum, put on the ovary and closed the bud again” (Informant 2).

4.4 The Costume

This chapter investigates the costume. The artist has used materials from building stores and other commercial shops and some of the present materials have trade names and can be found online at web shops. Sometimes the name of the material of the product is given. This information is not an accurate method for identification of materials as the information given from fabricators can be wrong or incomplete, and the only way to determine exact material composition is by technical analyses. However, the information might be useful for a further identification process or in a discussion on material replacements. Therefor, the trade names and suggested type of materials are included in the description.

4.4.1 Documentation and Description

The costume can be dissembled into several components (See figure 5). A strategy for naming the parts is done to be able to describe the object without to much confusion. An anatomic drawing of a passionflower, made by the artist, dictates the naming of the costume components (See Figure 3 & 4).

PASSIONSBLOMMAN

THE PASSION FLOWER

a. Foderblad
b. Kronblad
c. Korona
d. Operculum

e. Ståndare
f. Sträng
g. Knapp
h. Fruktämne

i. Pistill
j. Stift
k. Märke
l. Honungskörtel

a. Sepal
b. Petal
c. Corona filament
d. Operculum

e. Stamen
f. Filament
g. Anther
h. Ovary

i. Pistil
j. Style
k. Stigma
l. Honey gland

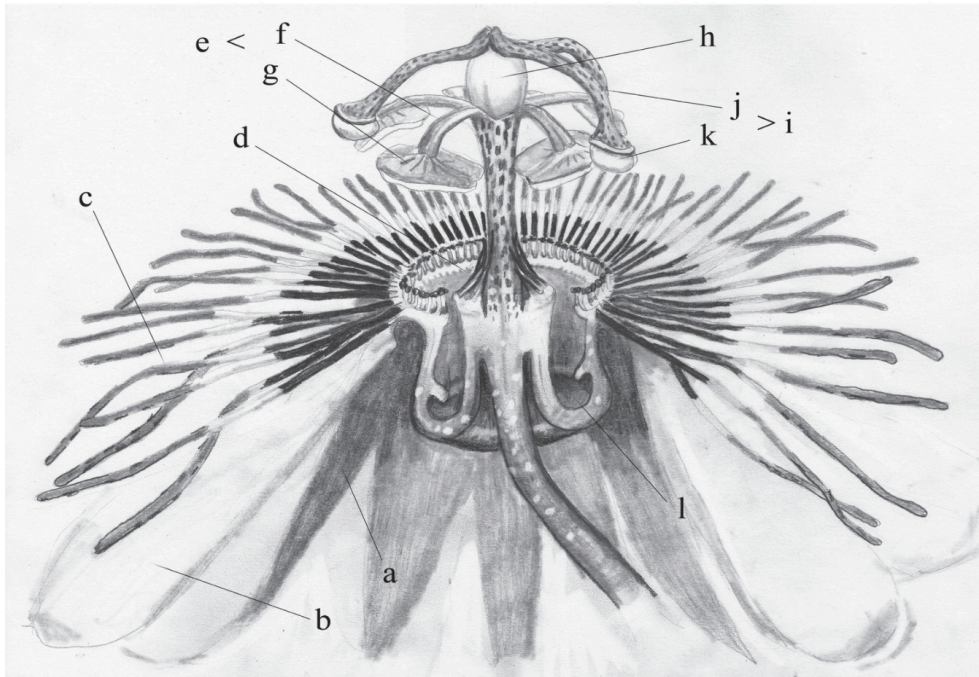


Figure 3. Drawing of a passionflower, part of the artwork SEAWEEEDSBLADET #1.
Licence: Ingela Ihrman

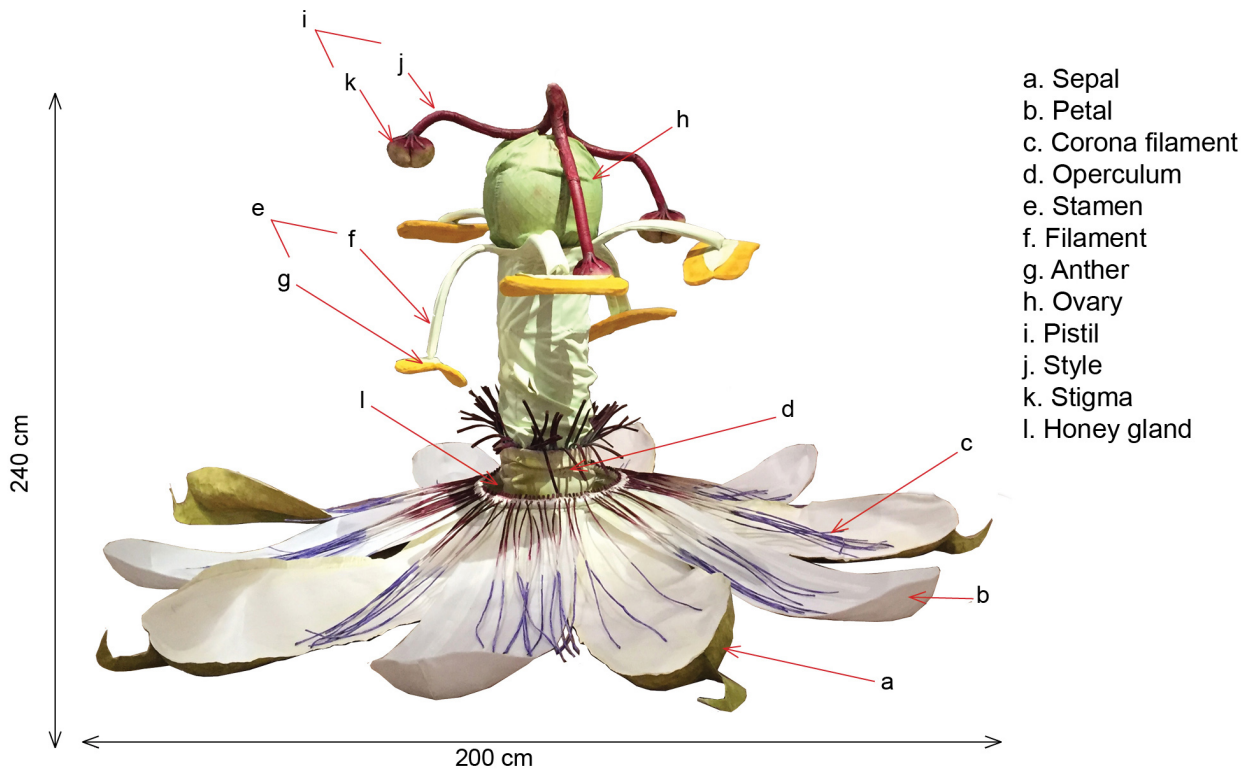


Figure 4. The illustration shows the names of each component of the costume. Illustration by Mira Dolk.

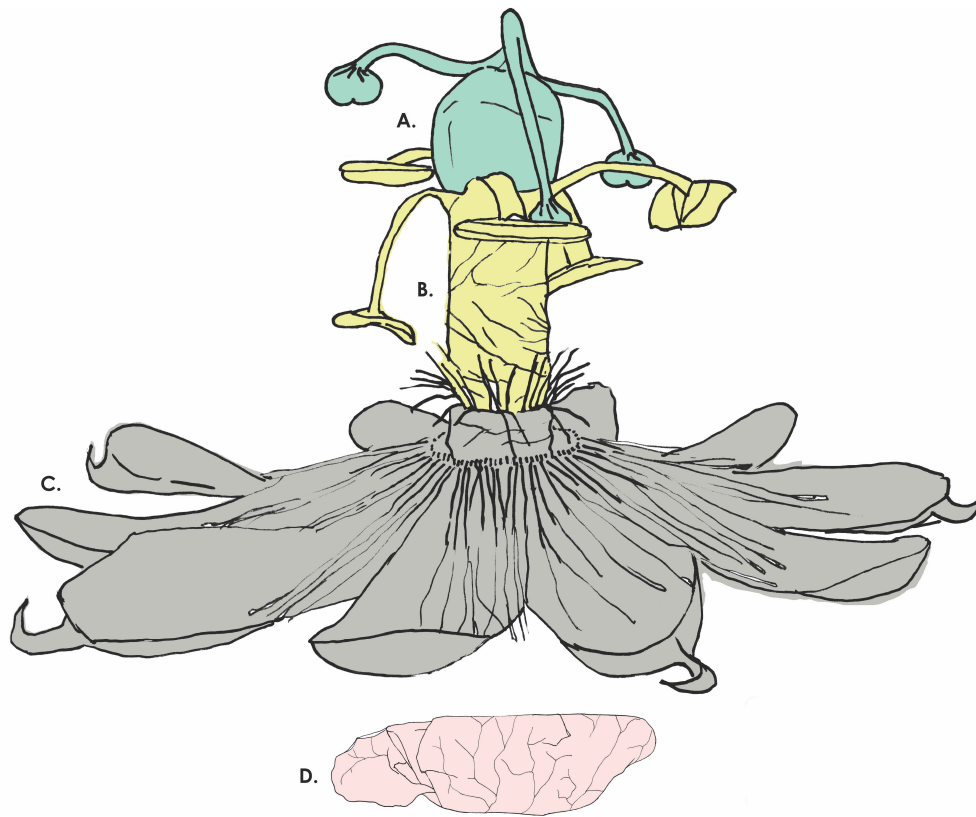


Figure 5. The illustration shows how the costume is disassembled into four components. Each component is marked with a colour and a number. A. Ovary and Pistil, B. Stamen, C. Petals, Sepals, Corona filament and Operculum, D. Base. Illustration by Mira Dolk.

4.4.1.1 Ovary and Pistil (A)

The performer is wearing this part at the head during the performance with the help of a balloon and two elastic ribbons that are attached to the opening (Ihrman 2020). The ovary is made of a green textile pouch dyed in different shades of green with some burgundy red strokes and spots. Inside the pouch is a white inflatable plastic ball of the commercial trade name “gym ball” or “pilates ball” that could be made of plasticized polyvinyl chloride, (PVC) as similar balls have been found on several web shops that state PVC as the material (Gymgrossisten n.d.; Proteinbolaget n.d.; Träningsmaskiner n.d.). The ovary is attached to a three-armed shaped object representing the pistil by three simple holes in the textile, where a cotton thread is drawn through and around each arm. The arms are made of a grey plastic foam material that is commercially used for pipe isolation (Ihrman 2020). This material could be polyethylene (PE) foam (Bauhaus n.d.; Biltema n.d.; Rinkaby Rör n.d.). The plastic foam material is covered with cloth tape and cotton textile patches with a mixture of water, wheat flour and “wood glue”(Ihrman 2020). The arms are thereafter spray-painted burgundy red with a lacquer paint (ibid). The arms are adhered to each other at the top by the cotton patching technique with the wheat flour mixture and fabric tape (ibid). At the end of every arm, the plastic foam material is cut into an octopus like shape, attached to the round shaped “stigmas” by stitches. The stigmas are made of some kind of wadding that is put into a nylon fabric, and thereafter painted in different shades of green and red colour. They have an organic two-part shape due to a thread that is bound across the middle of the stigmas.

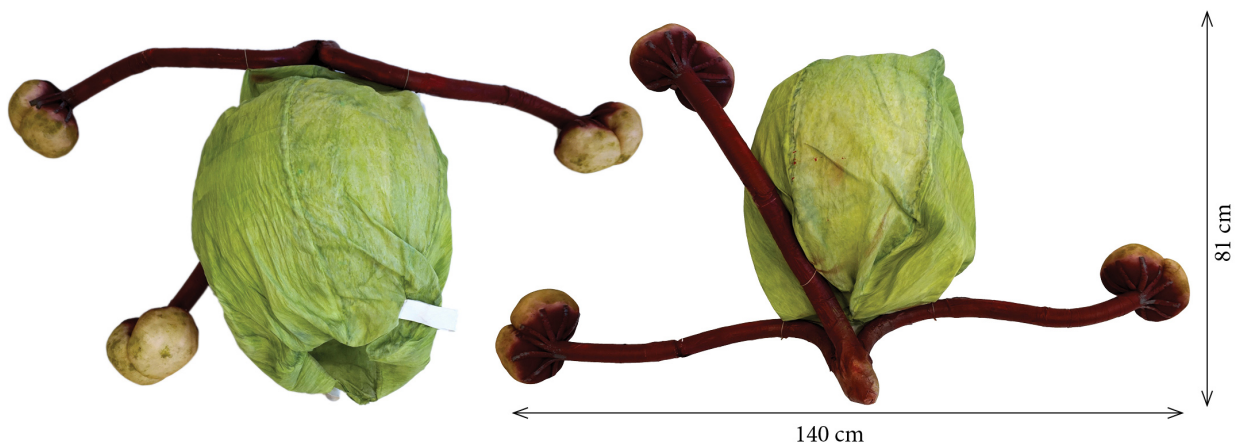


Figure 6. The ovary from the below (left) and above (right). Photo made by Mira Dolk.



Figure 7. The bottom with the opening of the textile pouch, showing a white inflatable ball inside (left). Detail of the pistil, showing the stigma (right). Photo made by Mira Dolk.

4.4.1.2 Stamen (B)

The performer is wearing this part on the body. Stamen consists of a tube with a round opening at the end and with the filament and anthers at the top. The tube is made of a synthetic textile material that is light green with brush painted vibrant green colour strokes of acrylic paint, stains in burgundy red and yellow (Ihrman 2020). At the bottom is a hem filled with a material that makes the opening stable and round shaped. Two longitudinal holes, about 15 cm high each and 40 cm in between are located at the middle of the tube, where the performer can reach out their hands. The filaments are constructed by machine sewn columns, two at each one that is filled with grey plastic foam, probably polyethylene (PE) foam, originally used for pipe isolation (the same as in the pistil arms in chapter 4.4.1.1), and carbon fibre rods (Ihrman 2020). Inside the tube is a construction made of two green plastic ribbons that run along the inside, attached to the fabric of the tube with fish line stitches.

Two white elastic synthetic ribbons, about 5cm wide, are attached to the lower green plastic ribbon by a simple knot so that they can be used as a kind of braces. Inside the tube one can also see the grey plastic foam material sticking out from the columns adhered to the lower green plastic ribbon with transparent glass fibre pressure sensitive tape. The anthers are made of a plastic foam material that is painted with a yellow acrylic paint (Ihrman 2020). The foam material could be polyurethane foam (PUR). At each backside, an ellipse shaped piece of the same fabric as the tube is attached with some kind of adhesive or hot melt glue. A machine stitch in the middle forms a longitudinal fold both on the back and the front of the anther that also holds the ellipse shaped fabric in place. The anthers are attached to the filaments by simple stitches.



Figure 8. Two sides of the stamen. Photo made by Mira Dolk.



Figure 9. Detail from the inside of the stamen. With the help of this construction, the performer can wear the component on the body with the help of the white elastic ribbons. Photo made by Mira Dolk.

4.1.1.3 Sepals, Petals, Operculum, Corona Filament & Honey Gland (C)

The flower has five of each petals and sepals. The petals are made of a light in weight white plastic foam material, that is used for step sound attenuation during flooring (Ihrman 2020). This material could be polyethylene (PE) foam (Bolist n.d.; K-rauta n.d.; Byggmax n.d.) and transparent packing tape. They are attached to a plastic ring of the type “hula hoop” with transparent glass fibre tape. The sepals are made by a “papier maché” technique, using cotton textile patches and a mixture of wheat flour, water and “wood glue” (Ihrman 2020). The outside surfaces are painted with a green paint made by a mixture of polyurethane paint and acrylic paint (ibid.). They are reinforced from the inside with carbon fibre rods (ibid.). Each sepal has a “hook” at the top that is reinforced from the inside with cardboard. The inside of the sepals are painted light green and lined with the same plastic foam material that the petals are made of, adhered by transparent pressure sensitive tape and some kind of adhesive. The sepals are attached to a plastic ring by the type “hula hoop” with a fine metal mesh that is attached to the sepals by the patching technique and threads. The corona filament consists of wood sticks that have been covered with cotton fabric patches and the mixture of water, wheat flour and wood glue (Ihrman 2020). They are painted with a red spray paint lacquer and a purple acrylic colour, applied by brush (ibid.). Each one is attached to a “hula hoop” with a white cloth tape covered with a white plastic foam material. On top of the ring there are stubs made of a grey plastic foam material that is commercially used as backing rod (Ihrman 2020). This could be polyethylene (PE) foam (Hornbach n.d; Jem & fix n.d.; XL-Bygg n.d.) spray-painted with burgundy red spray paint and attached to the plastic ring with hot glue.

The operculum is made by a machine-sewn tube of a synthetic fabric in a light green colour with spray painted strokes of burgundy red. At the inside, silver coloured cloth tape is covering the seams. At the top of the tube, adhered to the inside by silvered coloured cloth tape and glass fibre tape, are plastic foam strips. They are spray painted white and burgundy red. The honey gland is where the performer pours the soda and the audience is invited to drink from. The tube in the operculum is making a kind of pocket. The end of the textile is most probably attached to the yellow “hula hoop” ring by cable ties but this part was difficult to examine.



Figure 10. The closed bud in a storage condition (left). The blossoming flower in a storage condition (right). Inside the operculum there is a cardboard tube that is used when the flower is installed as a sculpture and is not used during the performance (right). Photo made by Mira Dolk.



Figure 11. Detail of Petals, sepals, honey gland and corona filament. Photo made by Mira Dolk.



Figure 12. Details of component C. Corona filament (up to the left). The image up to the right shows how the petals are attached to a “hula hoop” ring with the help of glass fibre tape. The image below shows how the sepals are attached to a “hula hoop” ring with the help of a fine metal mesh. Photo made by Mira Dolk.

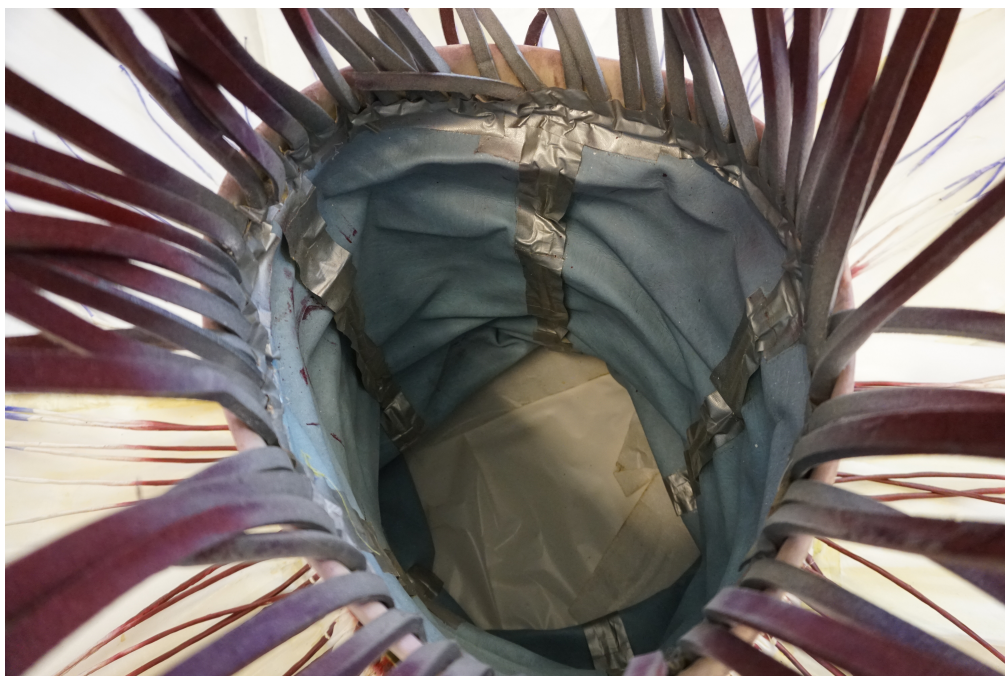


Figure 13. Detail of the operculum from the inside. The seams have been covered with a silver coloured cloth tape. Photo made by Mira Dolk.

4.4.1.4 Base (D)

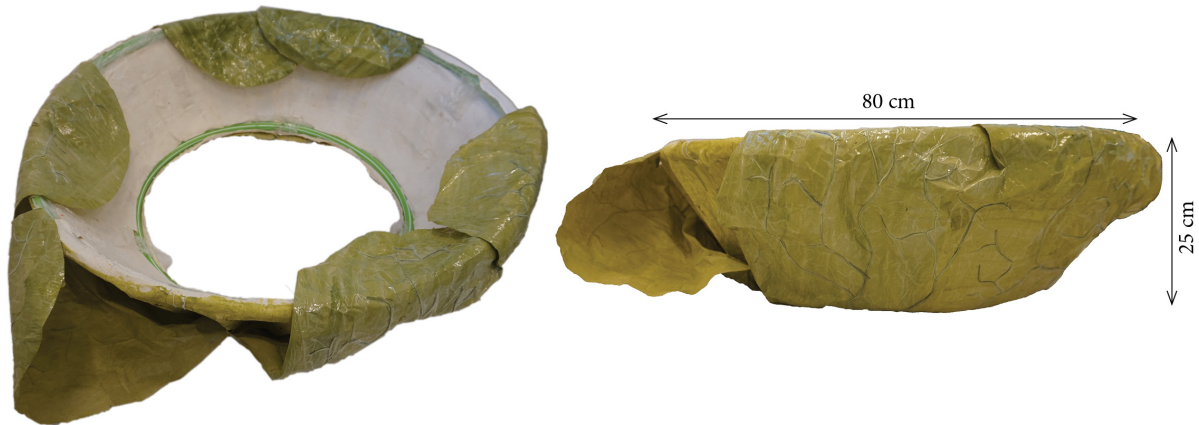


Figure 14. The base from above (left) and from the side (right). Image by Mira Dolk.

The base, located at the bottom of the flower is a round, slightly conical shaped object with two openings and three pairs of leaves attached to the outer sides. Two “hula hoop” plastic rings make the round shaped object. Between the rings there is an unknown material, covered with cotton fabric patches that are adhered to the substrate by the mixture of water, wheat flour and glue (Ihrman 2020). The inside of the base is untreated while the outside is painted with a mixture of green acrylic paint and polyurethane lacquer (ibid.). The leaves are attached to the outside of the base and are made of green painted paper, decorated with threads in a organic pattern and covered with transparent packing tape. At some places the paper is bare. Only one side- the outside is covered with the tape. The leaves are attached with staples on the outside of the base. It seems that the leaf has been strengthened with glass fibre tape from the inside at the stapled areas before attachment.

4.4.2 Condition

The condition of the different components varies. Some areas on the components should be considered as more sensitive or prone to degradation and are marked on figure 15. Close up images that document present damages are attached in Appendix 3.

Ovary and Pistil (A)

The overall condition is good. There is a tear about the size of 8 cm in diameter at the top of the textile pouch (See Appendix 3, A). There are expanding tears of the fabric at the places where the pistil is attached to the ovary pouch (See Appendix 3, A). Red paint is delaminating from the grey foam substrate at several places. This appears most frequently at the place where the arms are attached to the stigma (Figure 7). At one of the arms, the fabric tape is delaminating, revealing the white colour of the tape under.

Stamen (B)

The stamen is in an overall good condition. The ellipse shaped patches that are attached to the back of the anther are delaminating at several places but the seam holds them in place.

Sepals, Petals Operculum, Corona Filament and Honey Gland (C)

The overall condition is quite poor. Dirt and stains are frequently present on all surfaces at the inside of the petals and sepals (see Appendix 3, C). Brown small stains appear like a pattern on petals and sepals. The white foam material that the petals are made of is delaminating from each other at several places, especially at the tops. Perforating tears, pits and pressure marks, as well as a pattern of brown stains can be seen on several places at the white plastic foam material of sepals and petals (see Appendix 3, C). The petals have pressure marks from the sepals when the flower is closed. All “hooks” on top of the sepals have structural damages, as they are broken horizontally. One of the hooks has a previous repair that seems to have been fixed with melting glue. Another hook has a deep cut so the cardboard material is revealed. The red paint is delaminating from the stubs at the corona filament. Two of the corona filament sticks have broken into two parts and another one has lost its position from the plastic ring (see Appendix 3, C).

Base (D)

The overall condition is ok. The physical structure of the round shaped object is stable, however, the leaves are in a quite poor condition. They have tears on several places, both where the paper is bare from tape but also at the areas that are covered with packing tape (See Appendix 3, D). A large tear is visible at one of the attachment points.

4.4.3 How will the Costume be affected by the Performance Action?

4.4.3.1 Physical Forces

Michalski (1994) defines nine degradation agents that are potential risks for accelerated degrading of objects within museum collections, where *physical forces* is one of them (Michalski 1994, pp. 8-9). In relation to the performance, physical forces will impact the costume; both in relation to the handling and wearing of the costume and by the interaction with the audience.

Several areas on the costume show damages that most likely are caused by the audience. This is an assumption made from examining the costume and by watching video documentation of the performance. The areas of concern are mainly the sepals and petals, the corona filament and the base where parts have been damaged or broken and where tears, perforating scratches and pressure damages have been observed. By watching the video documentations one can see how the audience move around the flower and sometimes steps or stumbles on it. Sometimes it gets very crowded around the honey gland, which seems to accelerate the risk for damages. Even though the audience will be instructed to be careful, the risk will maintain.

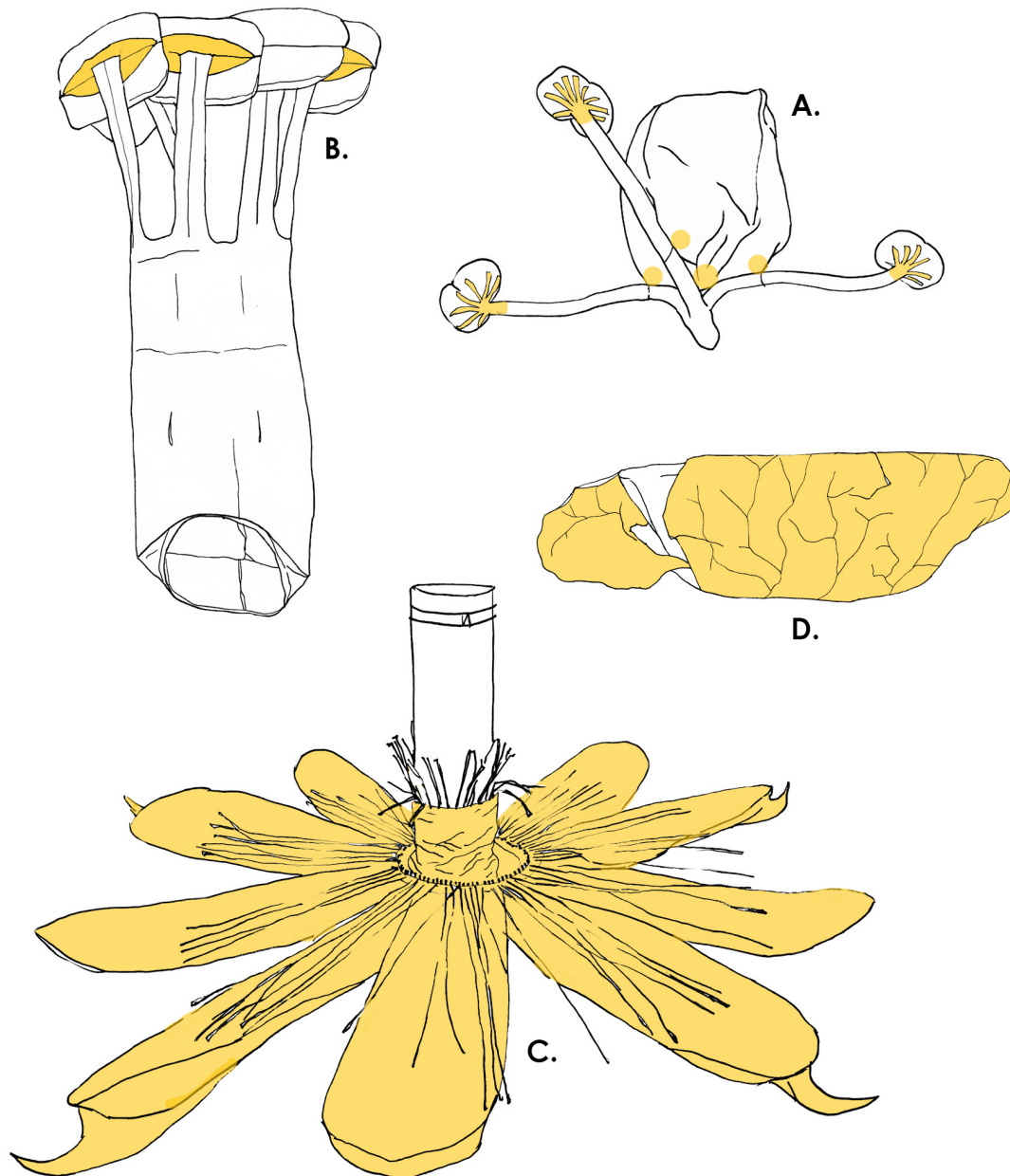


Figure 15. Illustration showing the areas where deterioration and damages are more frequently appearing and should be considered as sensitive areas. Illustration by Mira Dolk.

A performer will wear the costume, which means handling by the person who will do the performance as well as assistants that might help the performer.

There is a risk that the tear in the top of the ovary textile pouch, and the holes where the pistil is attached to the ovary, will expand further during future performance activation and handling. This could lead to significantly larger tears that could threaten the physically structure of the pouch and end with an irreparable damage. By watching video documentation and by examining the construction of this component, one could make an assumption that these damages are caused by an inherent tension of the textile due to the attachment to the pistil and its movements during performance as the pistil is quite heavy and moves back and forth.

There are instructions from the artist that the honey gland that will be filled with soda during the performance should be cleaned directly after the performance. The cleaning activity is also a form of physical force that has to be considered.

4.4.3.2 Materials

In relation to the physical forces, one has to include and consider the materials that this costume is made of. All materials, even the most durable ones, change and degrade with time (Chiantore & Rava 2012, p.16). In this case, almost all of the used materials have been produced for other purposes than being a durable costume. There is an assumption that the combination of the physical forces from the performance, with the inherent physical properties of each material, as well their combination with each other, will make the materials of this costume to degrade very fast.

Plastics

The artist has used several different kinds of plastic materials when making the costume. Plastics are semi synthetic or synthetic materials, chemically composed by polymers that are modified by additives (Shashoua 2008, pp. 1, 39). Polymers are very large molecules, formed by repeatedly joining small molecules, called monomers (Shashoua 2008, p.39). The additives, such as stabilizers, plasticizers, UV- absorbers, anti oxidants, pigments, and fillers are added to give the compound specific properties (Shashoua 2008, pp. 56-59).

Plastics display different degree of stability, depending on their chemical composition and present additives (Rychlý & Rychlá 2012, p. 161). They are affected by UV, temperature, oxygen, light, humidity, pollutants, additive migration and physical forces (ibid.). It is assumed that artworks made of plastic materials have a relatively short lifespan compared with art objects made of traditional materials (Shashoua 2008, p.ix). In a museum context, one can expect artworks made of plastic to show signs of degradation within 5 to 35 years (ibid.).

Some plastics are less stable than others (Shashoua 2008, p. 151). For example, plasticized polyvinyl chloride (PVC) and Polyurethane (PUR) are identified to be two of the most unstable plastics in museum collections (ibid.). It is assumed that the gym ball inside the ovary pouch, see figure 7, could be made of plasticized PVC, and that the anthers at the stamen, see figure 8, could be made of a PUR foam material.

Another important problem with plastic degradation in relation to composite art objects is the migration, or leaching, of additives (Pettersen 1999, p. 242). Additives incorporated during manufacture can be exhausted or migrate out to the surface, and affect the "own" substrate as well as other materials in contact with the object (ibid.). One plastic material can affect another if they are in close contact with each other and if one of the contacting plastics contains plasticizers (ibid.). The plasticizers can leach out to the surface and dissolve the other plastic (ibid.). Examples of such plastics are pressure sensitive tape, rubber based materials and PVC (ibid.). When it comes to plasticized PVC, the leaching of plasticizers causes deformation and shrinkage of the material as well it gets as a tacky and sticky surface (Cultural Heritage Agency n.d.).

Because of the unstable character of plastics, together with the fact that these materials are hard to identify without any advanced equipment, conservation cannot be approached in the same manner as

for traditional materials (Keneghan 1999, pp.356-357). Preventive conservation and improved storage are therefore highly valued conservation strategies for plastic artworks (ibid.).

The Culture Heritage Agency in the Netherlands has developed a *Plastic Identification Tool* on their homepage (Cultural Heritage Agency n.d.). Here one can read about the many types of plastics that are present in museum collections, their degradation and what kind of storage conditions that are recommended for each plastic. This is a great source of information and can help the conservator to choose the appropriate storage and exhibition conditions for artworks made of plastic materials. However, this is dependent on the identification of the present plastic.

Pressure Sensitive Tape

The artist has used at least four different pressure sensitive tape materials when making the costume, see table 1.

Type of Tape	Could be made of	References	Location
Cloth tape, white	Fabric backing. Rubber based adhesive.	Office Depot; RS components	A. Pistil C. Corona Filament
Cloth tape, silver	PE/Cloth, rubber adhesive	Stokvis tapes; RS Components	C. Operculum
Glass fibre tape (cross reinforced) transparent/white	PP backing. Hot melt adhesive. Synthetic rubber adhesive	Raja; Sweja; Narglass 532	B. Stamen C. Sepals, petals, operculum D. Base
Packing tape, transparent	PP or PVC backing. Acrylic hot melt or rubber based adhesive.	Grün 2011, p. 226	C. Sepals, petals D. Base

Table 1. Table of the different types of pressure sensitive tape that could have been used when making the costume. By making comparisons with the present materials of the costume with images and product information from commercial stores, assumptions has been made on what the present tape types could be made of. The assumptions are presented above with the reservation that only technical analysis of chemical composition can determine exact composition of these materials. Table by Mira Dolk.

Pressure-sensitive tape typically consists of four layers; adhesive mass, primer coat, backing and release coat (Smith et al 1984, p. 101). The backings can be made of paper, fabric, plastic materials such as plasticized PVC, or other flexible materials (Smith et al 1984, p. 101). The two general types of adhesive mass are those made of rubber and those made from synthetic polymers such as acrylics (O'Loughlin & Stiber 1992, p. 1). At the inside of the operculum tube, see figure number 13, the seams are covered with a silver coloured cloth tape that could be of the type RS PRO PE Coated Silver Duct Tape (RS Components n.d.). Accordingly to the company, this kind of tape is composed of a rubber based adhesive and a polyethylene (PE) backing (ibid.). It is found in literature that rubber based tapes undergoes a rapidly aging due to oxidation (Smith, et al 1984, pp.102-103). This ageing affects both the tape and the substrate that it is adhered to (ibid.). Initially, it will get sticky, oily and starting to yellowing, and gradually it will loosen its adhesive properties, becoming brittle, hard and discoloured (ibid.). The aging process differs when it comes to the acrylic adhesive tapes as they are relatively more stable but sensitive to cold temperatures (ibid.).

The artist has covered dyed paper with transparent packing tape to make the leaves that are adhered to the base, see figure number 14. When trying to find out what this kind of tape is made of, by making comparisons with products on the market, it is found that the composition of transparent packing tape varies. In the article *My work isn't ephemeral, it's precarious: Discussion of a conservation strategy for Doppelgarage by Thomas Hirschhorn* by Maike Grün (2011) a manufacturer of pressure sensitive tape was consulted and gave general information about packing tape (Maike Grün 2011, p.226). According to that source, the backings of packing tape are commonly made of polypropylene (PP) or PVC. The PP backings are often coated with an acrylic-based adhesive mass or some kind of thermoplastic adhesive (hot glue), while the PVC backings are mainly coated with rubber based adhesives (ibid.). The acrylic-based adhesives are more durable than the rubber based but are sensitive to physical impact which reduces the lifetime (Grün 2011, p.230). However, it could be assumed that for the transparent packing tape that has been used, a composition of either PP with an acrylic adhesive or PVC with a rubber based adhesive could be present.

Most of the published articles about pressure sensitive tape are focusing on the tape as a secondary material that causes discolorations and damages to the original object. In this case, the tape is rather a part of the object than a secondary addition and should therefore be considered as a material among the others that the artist has used for making this costume.

4.4.4 Installation Possibilities

Ihrman states that the costume is allowed to be exhibited without the performance, but if so, by the awareness that it will then be something different, a representation of the artwork and not the artwork itself (Ihrman 2020). If the costume would be exhibited without the performance, it should be installed as an open flower (ibid.). The artist do not accept that the costume is exhibited together with a video of the performance, as she do not think that this is the best way to mediate what the performance artwork was about (ibid.).

4.4.5 Artists Thoughts on Deterioration and Conservation

The artist has knowledge of the fact that the materials of the costume are not very durable (Ihrman 2020). However, she wishes that the costume would function as a performance costume for a longer period of time. Instead of an ageing of materials that will affect the visual appearance so that the artwork looks old, the artist prefer it to look new, as in the state it was acquired. She allows components being replaced when damaged or deteriorated. The artist says that all materials of the costume are replaceable. However, it is of a great importance that the replacing components are made with the same technique that she used when making it. The artist has built up specific material technical solutions for sculptural and construction problems and those solutions should be considered as part of the conservation of the artwork. She makes a distinction between components that are visible and components non-visible by the audience. The parts that are not seen by an audience, do not

have to be replaced and done with the same technique, they could even be improved to function in a more durable way (Ihrman 2020).

5. DISCUSSION

The initial question of this study was to determine what exactly *The Passion Flower* consists of as an artwork and what it is that the museum has acquired. Secondly, it was important to examine what the artwork is about as these parameters are essential for understanding the conservation needs. The artist interview has been totally seminal for gaining this knowledge.

The Passion Flower is first of all a *performance* artwork that includes a significant material component in the form of a handmade costume. The museum has acquired the performance artwork with all its components (the costume) including the right to reactivate the live action in future exhibitions. The live act is not dependent on the artist's presence as another person can do the performance. However, it is strongly dependent on the presence of an audience.

When it comes to contemporary art, the conservator has to consider and strive for the maintenance of the artist intentions of a work. To be able to clarify the original state of *The Passion Flower*, and how it was intentionally made to exist by the artist, it's been important to understand and to explain how the costume and the performance are connected to each other. To maintain the intentions and concept of this artwork, the performance and the costume are inseparable. The costume is in one sense in a lower priority than the performance as the artwork is entitled by the artist as a performance. In some ways, the performance appoints the costume its values as the costume was made for the purpose of the performance. However, the performance is totally dependent on the costume, in its original appearance, to function as an artwork. Without the costume, there is no performance. The artist allows for replacements of original materials of the costume, if this is made with the same techniques as the parts were originally made and composed. This means that in this case, the importance of the concept is beyond the aspect of preserving original material.

The costume has qualities that enable it to be exhibited as a sculpture. However, if the costume is displayed without the performance, it has to be made by the notion that it has then become something else than the original state of the artwork.

The costume has material issues as it shows damages from earlier performances, as well as being made of materials and constructions that are assumed to degrade very fast. This artwork is self-destructive in a way. The performance needs the costume to function, but when the artwork/ the activation happens, it destroys the costume in the same time.

In the case of *The Passion Flower*, the museum has basically two display possibilities; they can show it as a performance artwork, as it was originally made, or they can show the costume as a sculpture in an installation, as a representation of an artwork that once existed as a performance artwork.

5.1 Suggested Conservation Strategies

Depending on the ambition of the museum in relation to exhibiting *The Passion Flower*, different conservation strategies can be suggested. The conservation approach will be different if the museum decides to display the artwork as a performance artwork, or if they choose to display the costume on its own.

Display the Artwork in its Original State

If the ambition is to display the artwork in its original state, as a performance artwork, the conservator has to consider the concept of the artwork before the preservation of original materials of the costume. The strategy will have to focus on maintaining the possibility to the live action of the performance. Two important tasks have to be included in this strategy:

1. Establish a Document of the Performance

The conservator will have to establish a document of the performance where all information, documentation and related activities that are connected to the artwork is mapped and gathered so that the artwork can be reactivated in the future. This study can serve as a working guide for the artwork. Additional information could be added during the next time the performance will happen. Tate's *Strategy For the Documentation and Conservation of Performance* can be a useful tool in this process. A crucial point in this document is the transmission of information on how to do the performance. If the artist no longer will do the performance, there has to be a strategy for how another performer should do this artwork. This has to be worked out in cooperation with the artist.

2. Conservation of the Costume

The costume has to be conserved with the purpose of being used in the performance. Parts that are damaged today have to be stabilized and secured. When materials are damaged during future performances they can be replaced, and by more durable materials, but with the same technique as the artist have used. To realize this, an interview with the artist is necessary so as she can give information about the techniques and materials used and how damaged parts should be replaced.

Display the Costume without the Performance

If the ambition is to show the costume in an installation without the performance, then the strategy could change towards a preservation of the original materials as the costume has a great artistic value on its own. It speaks for how the artist works with material technical solutions where she uses and transforms commercial materials that are produced for other purposes into art. In relation to the display, it is important that the artist is consulted on how the installation in such case should be realized. During the artist interview, the artist was talking about an installation with the costume and a few bottles of soda, but this was not a clear statement, but rather an unfinished idea.

A proper analysis of present materials has to be done to be able to determine the best environmental conditions and materials for conservation interventions. Until then, and as the costume is a composite object, mainly composed by synthetic materials, general storage conditions for plastic materials are to recommend. When not under display, the costume can be stored in the dark, with a stable climate and a relatively low temperature as this is assumed to prolong the lifespan of the most plastic objects (Petterson 1999, p. 250). Most plastic materials also benefit from a dry climate (ibid.). The costume should not be closely packed with other objects to prevent chemical degradation. As some plastics develops a sticky surface due to additive migration, it is a good idea to prevent dust and other particles to reach the surfaces with the help of acid free paper sheets, covering the components (Petterson 1999, p. 250).

If the gym ball is made of plasticized PVC, that is the hypothesis here, it could start leaching plasticizers which could lead to two things; the additives could form a sticky surface that could have an impact on the textile of the ovary pouch as these two are in contact, and the ball itself can loose its shape and no longer serve its purpose as a support when the costume is exhibited as sculpture.

As the artist has suggested that materials that are not visible for the audience can be replaced by more durable materials, this gym ball could suggestible be removed and replaced by another material that is more durable and appropriate as a support.

5.2 Conclusion

Museums have started to acquire performance artworks not only by their material remains but also by the possibility to reactivate them. The live moment of a performance artwork might be ephemeral but the artwork as a whole will be durable and possible to display many times, if the museums have the right strategies for it.

For performance artworks in general, conservation of these artworks means maintaining the live action by reactivations in the future. Documentation of the performance live act and all related parameters that allows for a reactivation are the core activity as it is this knowledge that make future display possible. In relation to performance art, the role of the conservator will have to expand and go beyond material questions as the conservator will have to map and document all social, practical and technical parameters that a reactivation might be dependent on, as well documenting the live action itself.

In the case of *The Passion Flower*, there is both a performance and a material component to consider and conserve. Both parts constitute the artwork. The material component will deteriorate faster by the activation of the performance. However, this cannot stand in the way for the concept of the artwork. Two different strategies are formulated depending on how the museum decides to display the artwork. In both cases, a continued close collaboration with the artist will be required.

5.3 Future Research

A proper analysis of constituent materials of the costume is necessary to be able to determine the most ideal environmental conditions for storage and display. It is also necessary for being able to choose appropriate materials for interventive conservation actions such as cleaning and consolidation.

6. SUMMARY

This thesis has been focusing on conservation of performance art with material components by the examination of the artwork *The Passion Flower*. The artwork was created by the artist Ingela Ihrman in 2017 and acquired by the Museum of Modern Art in Stockholm in 2019. The artwork is a performance artwork where a handmade costume is included and play an important role for the artwork as whole. The costume represents a passion flower and the artist is wearing this costume when making the performance, interacting with the audience. The study has investigated the artwork based on an artist interview, and through examination of the costume as well as watching video documentation of the performance. This to get to the core of what the artwork is dependent on and to be able to understand what it is that is going to be preserved. Through literature studies about performance art, and performance art within museum collections, the study tried to understand what it means to acquire a performance work to a museum collection today. It has searched for information on how another museum have chosen to conserve their performance works and how conservators deal with these complex artworks in general. Through examinations of the costume, it was discovered that the materials are of an unstable nature and that the performance action itself causes damage to the costume. The artist interview revealed that original materials could be replaced, but that it was important for the artist that this is done with her techniques. The study has come to the conclusion that the conservation of performance artworks is about making reactivations possible, as it is through the live action that these artworks are displayed in their original state.

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Figures:

Figure 1. Picture from the performance *The Passion Flower* (2017). Performed by the artist Ingela Ihrman during the exhibition “With the future Behind us” at the Museum of Modern Art in Stockholm 2018. The flower is pouring passion fruit soda in its interior. Licence: Moderna Museet

Figure 2. A collage of screenshots from the video documentation of the performance at the exhibition “The inner Ocean” at der TANK, in Basel 2017. Licence: Ingela Ihrman

Figure 3. Drawing of a passionflower, part of the artwork *SEAWEEDSBLADET #1*. Licence: Ingela Ihrman

Figure 4. Illustration showing the names of each component of the costume. Mira Dolk 2020.

Figure 5. Illustration showing how the costume is disassembled into four components. Mira Dolk 2020.

Figure 7. Details of the ovary and pistil. The bottom with the opening of the textile pouch, showing a white inflatable ball inside (left). Detail of the pistil, showing the stigma (right). Mira Dolk 2020.

Figure 8. Two sides of the stamen. Mira Dolk 2020.

Figure 9. Detail from the inside of the stamen. With the help of this construction, the performer can wear the component on the body with the help of the white elastic ribbons. Mira Dolk (2020).

Figure 10. The closed bud in a storage condition (left). The blossoming flower in a storage condition (right). Inside the operculum there is a cardboard tube that is used when the flower is installed as a sculpture and is not used during the performance (right). Mira Dolk (2020).

Figure 11. Detail of Petals, sepals, honey gland and corona filament. Mira Dolk (2020).

Figure 12. Details of component C. Corona filament (up to the left). The image up to the right shows how the petals are attached to a “hula hoop” ring with the help of glass fibre tape. The image below shows how the sepals are attached to a “hula hoop” ring with the help of a fine metal mesh. Mira Dolk (2020).

Figure 13. Detail of the operculum from the inside. Mira Dolk (2020).

All photographs in the Appendices are taken by Mira Dolk (2020).

Tables:

Table 1. Table of the different types of pressure sensitive tape that could have been used when making the costume. By making comparisons with the present materials of the costume with images and product information from commercial stores, assumptions has been made on what the present tape types could be made of. The assumptions are presented above with the reservation that only technical analysis of chemical composition can determine exact composition of these materials.

Appendices

Appendix 1. Interview with the artist

Interview with the artist Ingela Ihrman. Include the transcriptions from three different interviews on three different occasions, as well as a representation from an email conversation.

Session 1:3 / Ihrman 2020/1

Zoom möte 20-04-20 (46.55 min)

Närvarande: Mira Dolk och Ingela Ihrman

TRANSKRIBERING från Intervju

Vad handlar verket passionsblomman om?

Det är en del av en serie blomningar som jag har gjort, alltså jag klädde ut mig till blomma första gången som jag gick på förberedande konstskola och mitt examensarbete, masterprojekt på konstfack var att jag iscensatte en jättenäckros blomning och sen har jag varit nattens drottning kaktusblomma. Så det blev en serie av det av det och alla de olika blomningarna handlar om egna saker. Jag kände att det hände så mycket för mig när jag klär ut mig eller kliver in i en blomknopp och öppnar mig och slår ut så. Det handlar om hur det känns att vara konstnär, människa, kvinna, kropp, döende, pubertal, att ha begär att vilja attrahera. Då är passionsblomman den av dem som handlar om intimitet och attraktion mest för att det är det den ägnar sig åt, att på ett rätt våldsamt sätt slå ut, den är rätt stor med de här tunga kronbladen och koronan som slår ut och att den gör det här för att attrahera pollinerare som får komma. Det är som att jag vill att det ska bli en intimitet, att det ska kännas, att ta sig fram där mellan kronbladen och få erbjudandet att få ett sugrör i handen och frågan är det här något du skulle vilja bjuda in i ditt liv? Man kan svara ja och nej på det och jag tycker det var spännande att också få ett nej om man verkligen ansträngt sig. För mig finns det en sårbarhet i att ”make an effort”, det är ganska tydligt att jag har ansträngt mig när jag har byggt den här blomman och att jag har den på mig, det är bökigt. Men om publiken säger nej, det är också som att säga nej till livet, ska du inte göra det här? Den handlar om saker på olika plan, att göra själva situationen, att göra performancet är socialt. Det är ett sätt för mig att ge mig in det okontrollerbara kaos som jag upplever att det sociala är, att man inte vet vad som händer när man är med andra människor för det inte går att styra över det. Det är som att jag sjösätter något när jag gör performance, där jag är med, och andra är med och det finns en ram, ett väldigt enkelt manus som jag bestämmer över men det finns väldigt mycket som jag inte bestämmer över. Att överlämna mig åt att inte veta, det tycker jag är skrämmande men även därför intressant.

Nästa fråga handlar om läsningen, jag tycker att du pratade lite om det men finns det något du skulle vilja lägga till det, om läsningen av verket?

Ja. Det kanske är det där att det är jag som gör performancet, det finns en sårbarhet i det. Det är så självklart för mig, när det är min kropp som är i verket. Jag är väldigt utsatt just då och så tänker jag att så är det med alla mina performances, att jag utsätter mig. Om det vore en skådespelare eller en dansarkropp, någon annan kropp som är mindre sårbar i den situationen så kanske det bara blir ett ”spectacle”. Det måste finnas den där nerven eller osäkerheten, det får inte bli för tight eller välregisserat och jag har byggt in det i att det är hemgjort, den här (turkosa) strapen, (kostymen) är inte ”high tech” alls, det är amatörmässigt nästan. Och det är viktigt att man inte hamnar i den här ”glassigheten”, att publiken kanske oroar sig om den kommer att gå sönder, om den kommer att öppna sig osv och när jag har gjort själva performancet så har folk som jobbat fått komma fram och hjälpa till lite. Och det ska vara så, det ska inte vara vattentätt.

Jag har sett det i ditt andra performance med jättenäckrosen, att det tar ganska lång tid för den att slå ut och att man undrar och blir lite nervös, hur ska det gå?

Ja men precis, det är vidrigt att det tar lång tid och att man inte vet om det kommer gå men att det finns en kvalitet i det. Var ligger skammen, var ligger nervositeten. Att klä upp mig till blomma är att bli ett freak och att jag kanske från början känner mig ”akward” och sen att i de här situationerna, performancet, så lämnar jag över det till den som möter mig för att det blir mer konstigt att möta en som klätt ut sig till en blomma än att vara den. Så jag blir med grundad och ”safe” i min rustning, det hör till det här med Pride kultur, att det är något som

funkar, det är en så stark upplevelse, man flyttar runt skammen till de andra, och att man bara höjer upp volymen på konstigheten i sig själv.

Skulle du vilja berätta om din arbetsprocess och då med fokus på hur Passionsblomman kom till?

Jag hade gjort de andra blomningarna och så fick jag en ide 2015, jag hade precis flyttat till ett område där jag bor som heter Seved och jag hade en ide om att jag skulle göra en blomning i mitt vardagsrum eller i ett annat vardagsrum i den stadsdelen. Och jag hade kontakt med Skånes konstförening och jag hade pratat med dem om att kanske göra det i deras regi och de var med på det men det blev aldrig av. Jag tyckte det skulle vara så fint att blomman skulle få besök, och att man skulle få en adress och kanske en portkod, leta upp sig till en dörr, ringa på dörren öppna dörren, ta av sig kläderna och det sista lagret av intimitet skulle vara blommans kronblad som man skulle forcera för att få komma in. Och det är väl en slags dejting erfarenhet som jag höll på med då. Jag har alltid tyckt att visa performance, eller konst i hemmamiljö är något alldeles särskilt och att det är en krukväxt som ju hör hemma där. Senast i våras gjorde jag ett performance i lägenhetens badrum som en jättemussla. Jag sökte ett residency med idén men ingenting blev av. Jag hade dock svårt att släppa idén. Just det där med sugrören och att hålla läskan, jag skrockade inombords av den tanken och kände att jag måste nog göra det här på något vis ändå fastän jag inte hade lust. Jag var så trött på att bygga grejer med vetemjölsklister och de här kronbladmaterialen, det kändes som att jag repeterade mig själv och det kändes pinsamt. Men sen blev jag inbjuden till en utställning i Basel av en filosof/curator som heter Chus Martinez och för mig var det ett stort uppdrag, jag fick 100 000 i budget, det var utomlands, jag var imponerad av Chus, och jag var jättenervös. Det var dålig kommunikation, hon skriver sina mail i ämnesraden typ, hon skriver inte "Dear Ingela", och jag visste inte om det skulle bli av? Men den utställningen heter the "Inner Ocean", de inre haven, som jag började jobba med 2016 på ett residency i Indien på en ö där och utforskade tidvattenzonen. Jag började tänka på min kropp i ett vatten och den här informationen om att i äggblåsor med mogna äggceller så finns en vätska som har samma salthalt som urhavet och att vi bär med oss det i våra kroppar. Det var ett inre hav och så hittade jag andra inre hav i Skånes berggrund och så skrev jag om det i Seaweedsbladet som var med i utställningen på Moderna museet. Då tänkte jag att juicen, honungskörtlarna var blommans inre hav så då fick jag ihop det, jag fick ihop olika slags verk som kunde utgöra en utställning och då kändes det lätt att göra ett sån performance som jag har gjort förut för jag ville att det skulle bli någonting där. Och då uppstod tillfället att göra den här blomman så då kom den till. Okej, nu gör jag den här.

Kommer materialet och iden om ett performance samtidigt?

Både performance idén och materialen jag arbetar med här är ingen nyhet för mig. Jag har återanvänt materialen till kronbladen och foderbladen och jag har löst materialproblem längs vägen. Alltså det där bygget, det är rockringar, den är fruktansvärd. Det är en materialteknisk problemlösning att försöka klura ut och få ihop det med allt och skalan. Det är både kul och jättesträngande för att jag måste börja innan jag vet hur det ska sluta. För att det måste bli så, jag tror att alla tycker det är jobbigt, det är en total kontrollförlust. Jag får mycket ångest av det, att stå där och inte veta hur jag ska göra och jag blir väldigt ensam i det. Jag behöver ju kroppen för att förstå hur stor den skall vara. Om man gör skulptur måste man ju svara på det på andra sätt men där har jag ändå ett svar. Och det här att den blir stor, det finns en humor för mig i det, jag tycker att det är så roligt.

Delar skärm. Jag har lite olika bilder från Basel och Moderna museet. Det verkar som att verket har olika tillstånd, skulle du kunna berätta lite om det?

Det är ett sätt att förhålla sig till den här situationen som är en utställningsperiod och att det finns en allmän tanke om att tiden står still där inne i ett utställningsrum som jag irriterar mig på och jag vill liksom berätta om att vi kroppar dör eller tiden går och att det händer även där inom de vita konstrummen. Så då har jag löst det tycker jag genom att blomman först är slutet och sen blommar och sen vissnar det finns en anakronism där i när jag gör performance att den vissnar och sen reser den sig igen till utslagen under utställningsperioden. Och på Moderna tror jag inte att den vissnade. Det där kan ju vara olika från situation till situation men i verket finns den möjligheten och det skulle oxå kunna bli en frukt i slutet; att den utblommade blomman försvinner och så kommer det en frukt. Så har jag tänkt att nattens drottning eventuellt ska ske och att det kommer ett kaktusfikon för de ser väldigt roliga ut men det har jag inte gjort än. Så det finns en livstid och allting handlar om att den utblommade blomman, att det blir så, och det är ju intressant ur ett konservators perspektiv, att de här materialen måste ha den förmågan att kunna vissna, hade den varit gjord utav stål och plast så hade den inte kunnat göra det. Och jag gillar det, även om det är jättejobbigt eftersom det blir kropp av det, på samma sätt som hud åldras eller hår blir smutsigt så gör de materialen oxå det, att de är halvflexibla.

Kan verket visas utan den performativa delen?

Jo det kan den, det har jag gjort, men det blir något annat. Det blir mer en redovisning av ett verk, det blir inte själva verket och i konstutställningssammanhang så blir det ibland så. Det går ju att föreställa sig och det finns ju en berättelse i verket som är performancet och jag tycker inte att det förmedlas bäst med en video. Det har jag stått inför, att curatorer vill sätta en inspelning av performancet, verket bredvid skulpturen. Det var nattens drottning på Lunds konsthall och det ville inte jag, det kändes som att man tog bort något, som när blommor slår ut, att det är något man missar när man inte är där, jag blir jättearg på det.

Om man skulle visa passionsblomman utan performancet hur skulle den visas då?

Det skulle vara den öppna blomman. Då skulle det kanske stå "kostym, skulptur" man kan ju föreställa sig kroppen och de där små hålen. Det kanske skulle finnas tre flaskor läsk en bit bort. Så att man kan föreställa sig det. Men jag skulle inte göra den här livscykeln då utan låta den vara, den skulle kunna visas som utblommad.

Vad är den viktigaste aspekten med performancet?

Det är svårt att svara på men att det är en publik och att situationen är där, det är mindre viktigt att allt funkar.

Skulle någon annan kunna göra performancet?

Ja så måste det ju vara. Men då skulle jag vilja att den som gör det vet vad det här handlar om. Och relaterar till det på sitt sätt. Så att man går in i det med en insikt. Det kanske inte behöver vara att de har samma som jag men att det finns en respekt för och en kunskap om vad verket handlar om.

Tycker du att original materialen är en integral eller väsentlig del av verket?

Jag förstår inte.

Till exempel, är det viktigt att det papper som du har använt till basen att det består, skall vi bevara det pappret eller om det bryts ned kan bytas ut till ett annat papper som har liknande egenskaper?

Det kan bytas ut. Allt kan bytas ut.

Är det viktigt att det visuella uttrycket ser ut som det gör nu eller accepterar du ett visst åldrande och i sådana fall vad för åldrande accepterar du?

Jag vet inte riktigt men jag tror att. Om man tänker att det finns oändliga resurser för konservering så skulle jag föredra att de inte åldras utan att de byttes ut.

För dig är det alltså viktigt att det visuella uttrycket är ungefär som det är nu?

Just nu är det så, för det skulle se konstigt ut om den blommade och såg gammal ut eftersom blommor blommar som nyfödda barn. Men om 50 år eller så, då kanske de här materialen i sig har, då kanske man skulle tänka på det här på ett annat sätt, att det är gammalt och att det finns ingen möjlighet, då skulle det vara konstigt om det var nytt. Det kommer sluta kännas viktigt om ett tag när verket är gammalt och tiden är gammal och allt har förändrats.

Men så länge du vill göra performance med kostymen så skall verket fungera?

Jag hoppas att den alltid kommer fungera som en performance kostym. Men jag tänker på det här med plast materialen, de kommer ju bli sköra och då är det bättre att de byttes än att det ser ut som "vintage".

Vad har du använt för material och tekniker för de här komponenterna? Visar en bild på de yttre kronbladen

Jag gjorde en "papier mache" på så sätt att det är positiv form, jag gjuter inte utan jag lägger på direkt, så jag har gjort den här foderblad formen som vi tittar på nu, den byggde jag upp i min atelje på en säck som hade den här formen och som hade en längd som jag trodde att jag skulle få plats i och sen täckte jag den med lappar av lakansväv som jag rivit i remsor, klippt i rutor och limmet är vatten, vetemjöl och trälim, blandat. Och så blir det hårt men ändå åldrande. Och kroken tror jag är en pappgrej innerst som jag liksom klätt in och satt fast. Något snöre eller nåt på utsidan, kan vara vikt.

Är det samma teknik som du använt för basen? Visar bild på basen

Där är det något som sitter ihop, som gör att formen mellan rockringarna, det är något där. Jag minns inte riktigt.

Vad är koronan gjort av? Kolfiber?

Det är inte kolfiber för det är för dyrt, det är pinnar. Ikea har gjort någon inredningsgrej som är en bunt med pinnar, det finns ett myrorra där jag jobbar så jag köpte det där. De är jättesköra och supertorra och så har jag täckt dem med sån lakansväv.

Vad är det för färg?

Det röda är en spraylackfärg och den blå är en akrylfärg som jag har målat med pensel. Den vita är obehandlad.

Här har jag lyft för att förstå konstruktionen och jag undrar hur koronaspröten sitter fast? Visar bild på hur jag lyfter koronan

Tack för att du frågar "skrattar", det är en vävtejp, textiltejp där som jag har lindat runt och sen tagit ett varv runt rockringen och sen är det täck med skumplasten och de gråa bitarna är botteningslist som används som isolering mellan fönsterkarm, den har jag köpt på Hornbach och är fastlimmade med smältlim.

Där släpper ju färgen och att jag tänker att för varje performance så kommer ju färgen släppa mer, det är liknande material på pistillen.

Ah men där sitter den bättre va?

Ja och framförallt så blir den inte lika utsatta för fysisk påfrestning.

Jag jobbar med det materialet nu och skall testa och måla med linoljefärg och testa om det biter bättre, det är ju utmanande för färgen att sitta fast där.

Hur mycket färg får släppa?

Så lite som möjligt. Om jag hade gjort performancet själv så skulle jag gått och sprayat på efter varje gång och hållit den så fräsch som jag orkar. Så att det funkar, det ska inte se grått ut. Men det kommer aldrig vara perfekt men där får konservatorn gärna göra vad som går för att det ska se nytt ut. Det är inget önskvärt att de vita skarvarna skall synas men det gör det. Jag kommer aldrig kunna dölja materialiteten i det här med nya lager färg, det är bara så.

Jag har förstått att kronbladen sitter fast i en plastring, men hur sitter foderbladen fast?

De är en egen rockring som bara vilar i ringen, jag tror att det finns tre buntband som jag varje gång sätter fast dem i men de går att ta ur. Och jag minns att nån gång så har de varit för sig och nån gång togs de aldrig loss, de behöver inte sitta stenhårt utan bara vila därinne.

Vad är det för textilt material i Stamen?

Jag vet inte men tror att det är liknande material som i dykardräker, som skumgummi inuti en trikå, att det är en viskos med en tunn skumgummi. Och där inuti är det kolfiber. Det gula är skumgummi och inuti dem för att de ska ha en schvung så är det kolfiberstavar som jag sytt in och de sitter fast i en ring som är gjort av sånt plastband som man packar virke med.

Och sen sitter ett slags plastskummmaterial inuti. Så då är kolfibern inuti dem?

Ja och det är rörisolering.

Är de itusågade?

Jag tror det.

Vad används det här transparenta prickiga tyget till?

Var det i verket?

Det har registrerats och dokumenterats som en komponent i verket men jag har inte hittat den i någon dokumentation eller så.

Det där är en gammal gardin som min mamma har haft i sina gömmor, jag vet inte varför den är med.

Den tillhör inte till verket, den ska då avregistreras?

Ja. Gud vad konstigt.

Avslutar för att mötas nästkommande dag.

Session 2:3 / Ihrman 2020/2

Zoom möte 20-04-21 (23.31 min)

Närvarande: Mira Dolk och Ingela Ihrman

TRANSKRIBERING från Intervju

Hur lång tid tar performancet?

Först så står jag i den här knoppen och jag kan stå där ett tag, det tar väl tio minuter eller en kvart och sen så när den öppnar sig, alltså det går fort, och så beror det på hur länge man låter det där hålla på och det är beroende på vilken publik det är, men kanske mellan en kvart och en halvtimme.

Jag har varit i kontakt med Matilda som ju var ansvarig som förvärvade verket och vad jag förstår så har de varit intresserade av ditt konstnärskap ganska länge och velat förvärva något ur produktionen och att när tillfälle gavs så diskuterade ni fram vad som skulle förvärvas, stämmer det?

Ja eller alltså hon hade ateljesamtal med mig för ett tag sen, innan moderna utställningen men det var inte som att vi pratade om någon försäljning då.

Det min egentliga fråga är Vad har museet förvärvat, har de förvärvat kostymen eller hela verket?

Hela verket har de köpt. De har köpt performancet och performance kostymen och skulpturen. Däremot har vi inte sagt något om att jag inte får göra en ny passionsblomma, så mycket äger de inte men de äger *den* passionsblomman.

Kommer du att vilja fortsätta göra performance i den som museet har köpt eller övergår det här nu till att någon annan gör performancet?

Det där har vi inte bestämt, de har ju velat träffa mig för att vi skall prata om det säkert och komma fram till det men jag kommer föreslå att det är upp till, att de har rätt att göra det utan mig men att jag vill gärna bli tillfrågad av dem om jag vill göra det. Och jag kan känna att jag inte vill, att jag inte kommer vilja göra det, att det känns bra att det fungerar utan mig.

Igår pratade vi om att ifall delar förstörs eller bryts ned så kan de ersättas. Vad skulle du tycka var den bästa metoden för det? Vilken metod som används beror på vad du tycker är viktigt, om du tycker att det är viktigt att delarna tillverkas på samma sätt så som du har tillverkat dem så kanske man behöver dokumentera din arbetsprocess, eller om man kan ersätta delar genom att använda en annan typ av tillverkningsprocess.

Jag tycker att det är viktigt att den tillverkas på samma sätt så som jag har tillverkat den eftersom det finns bättre sätt att göra den men den är ju verkligen mina sätt att göra, lösa problem och det är ganska specifika lösningar som jag har gjort. Jag kan tänka mig att några delar av konstruktionen som inte syns, till exempel hur rockringarna, det som inte märks för en publik, det kan man verkligen förbättra och det kan göras på andra sätt och det vore verkligen bra tror jag, om de kunde göras på andra sätt (skrattar). Men det som syns utåt borde man fortsätta med mina metoder med.

Har du eller konservator lagat delar fram tills nu?

Ja det har jag. Ja den går sönder lite hela tiden, de här gula delarna har släppt så där har jag sytt fast. Och den där pistillen tror jag att sprayat om för att färgen släpper. Sen är det den här ballongen också. Den går ju inte sönder men jag tror det materialet åldras väldigt snabbt så man måste hela tiden ha en färsk ballong. Innan jag gjorde den på moderna också, jag fick plats i den verkstaden där och pengar för att förbättra den och det behövdes göras ganska mycket, jag hade glömt bort det. Jag satte i kolfiber i de gröna foderbladen, jag förstärkte dem från insidan, för de vek sig annars, det gick inge bra innan. Och då tog jag den vita plasten och flyttade undan den och lagade, så det var ganska mycket jobb med det innan Modernautställningen.

Visar bild på Ovary. Dels så finns ett hål uppe på toppen som är en reva som det kanske inte kommer hända så mycket med under performancet. Men det finns ytterligare hål vid fästansordningen till pistillen som riskerar att bli en jättestor reva under performance. Då är frågan om det här skall åtgärdas inför nästa performance och om man skall göra en förstärkning eller om det behövs göra en ny påse som är mer hållbar.

Jag skulle förstärkt den inifrån och gjort ett fint broderi, den typen av lagningar bara smälter in i verket. Det kommer inte synas.

Vad jag har förstätt så har verket visats i Basel och på moderna, har det visats någon annanstans?

Ja det har visats i Geneve på ett ställe som heter Zabriskie Point. Det är ett konstnärsdrivet ställe som har en lokal i en gammal vänthall på ett busstorg i Geneve.
Och då gjorde jag ett performance där och den stod där ett tag sen oxå.

Läsken, sköljs den ur efter performancet?

Nej men en viktig del, hur performancet gjordes, jag hade ett manus tillsammans med de som jobbade där och då ingick det att de sköljde ur läsken direkt efter performancet. När jag hade gått ur där så svampade de ur all dricka som var kvar med vatten och tog bort det.

Är det här ett manus som följer med verket?

Nej det gjorde det inte men jag kan skicka det till dig om du vill. Det är plain men viktigt.

Avslutande formalia.

Session 3:3 / Ihrman 2020/2

Zoom möte 20-05-08 (24.26 min)

Närvarande: Mira Dolk och Ingela Ihrman

TRANSKRIBERING från Intervju

Vad är det för färg på foderbladens gröna utsida?

Jag tror att det är en polyuretan lack från Biltema uppblandat med akrylfärg.

Kommer du ihåg varför du gjorde så?

Jag gjorde så med jättebjörnlokan också. Det blir en ganska stark, slitstark av lacket och då blir det ganska praktiskt, jag slipper dra över allt två gånger och bara blanda ihop det. Men så hade jag det hemma oxå, det är inte så noga övervägt.

Ja de slår ju ganska hårt i marken men det är inte mycket märken.

Ja det är någon sån bygglack liksom.

Vad är det vita plastskum materialet som du gjort kronbladen av för något material?

Ja, det heter golvfoam, jag tror jag har köpt det från Byggmax, de har börjat byta ut lite mot en blå variant nu, men underlagsfoam, en åldersbeständig underlagsfoam i etenplast som sätts vid stegljudsdämpning vid golvläggning och de finns i lite olika tjocklekar.

Och det är samma som du använt när du virat runt koronaringen? Visar bild på korona bilden.

Ja det är samma.

Hur sitter dessa ihop? Visar bild på pistillens armar.

Jag tror att de sitter ihop med det materialet som ”papier mache” textil, det som de gröna foderbladen är gjort av,

Med det limmet då?

Ja, antingen det eller

Det ser ut som det

Men är det inte så att de där pistillerna är lindade med en tejp.

Jo halvt, det är liksom som att här, Visar bild, så tar vävtejpen slut.

Ja men det var ju smart för där skulle det ju var lite stabilare då så blir det lite gung på det under. Så då sitter de ju ihop med den där lakansväv o vetemjöl. Det är säkert en tejp under oxå.

Hur sitter den här på kroppen? Visar bild på fruktämnet med pistill. Var har man de vita banden?

De har man i armhålorna.

Och då när du har ballongen, sitter den bakom huvudet eller på huvudet?

På huvudet. Man har den där gröna påsen nere till axlarna ungefär så att den gungar hela tiden så att huvudet trycker upp i ballongen och det skapar en instabilitet och man får liksom kämpa för att den ska sitta uppåt på huvudet. Det är en jobbig detalj i performancet, att göra det.

Är det något som är viktigt, någonting som du önskar skulle underlättas eller är det viktigt med kämpandet?

Jo men det är det, att den liksom har en instabilitet är viktigt men då får gärna bli lite lättare. Alltså det ska inte bli helt stabilt men gärna lite mer stabilt.

Och så har vi ju den här honungfickan. Visar bild. Jag vet inte var tyget slutar, hur blir det en ficka liksom?

Ja hur blir det det..? Den är ju lös, nej den sitter ju fast.

Sitter den fast på någon av ringarna?

Ja jag tror att den sitter fast på typ den yttre med, skulle tro det med buntbandet där, och sen går den ju upp och slutar i de där fransarna och så står man i dem sen. Och det här är någonting som man kanske ska tänka på, om man tänker på förbättringar för det är vanliga sömmar som jag sen tejpat med silvertejp på baksidan för att inte läcka, det funkar inte så bra men det funkar lite.

Precis det är ju en följdfråga till det är ju att vi pratade om att materialen kan bytas ut men att det är viktigt för dig att om man gör det så är det viktigt att man gör som du har gjort, att de materialtekniska lösningarna är samma och att man använder samma teknik som du gjort men att vissa konstruktioner som finns på insidan kan förbättras rent av, eller göras på annat sätt?

Ja

och min fråga på det var då om man kan byta ut material, nu tar jag basen som ett exempel, det här pappret, det skulle kunna bytas ut mot ett mer åldersbeständigt papper typ eller något annat material som ser likadant ut, är det ok?

Vet du just det där med pappret, det är verkligen okej för jag är inte så nöjd med den, det är ju tejpat med packtejp där, jag orkade inte hitta på någon bra lösning där så jag gjorde det i sista sekund och tänkte äsch det blir bra nog. Absolut något japanpapper eller vad som helst annat, det är mer att just den formen behövs där och då får det va troget hur det ser ut.

Ja absolut.

Och vad var det jag tänkte på...Jo just med silvertejpen på sömmarna där...det är ett ganska utsatt område..

Ah men precis, där inne jag hade tänkt att jag skulle göra typ en rund skål eller någonting där som man kunde hålla ner läskan i om jag någon gång lärde mig att jobba med nån plast eller så men det kan jag ju inte så. Då hade man kanske sluppit lite...

Vad är det för sprayfärg, färg på de gula knapparna? Visar bild på stådaren.

Det är en akrylfärg. Och Det gröna är en ganska utspädd akrylfärg som jag har målat med pensel.

Och här typ det lite vinröda, är det samma spray lack färg som på övriga delar?

Det där är nog skav bara.

Avslutande formalia.

**Frågor ställda per email/ Ihrman 2020/4
Korrespondens 20-04-27
mellan Mira dolk Flodin och Ingela Ihrman**

1. Performance

Vill du i korthet beskriva performancet, vad är det du gör och vad får publiken uppleva?

Under performancet blommar passionsblomman med förhoppning om att bli pollinerad. När knoppen öppnat sig håller den/jag passionsfruktsläsk i blommans honungskörtlar, vid basen av kronbladen. Publiken erbjuds att ta ett långt sugrör och komma fram och smaka på läsk. Sugröret behövs för att nå ner och liknar fjärilar och kolibirers snabel och näbb. När passionsblomman blommat klart vissnar den och jag kliver ur pistillen.

2. Kontext

Finns det riktlinjer för hur och var performancet skall ske?

Nej, det kan ske på olika platser men inte utomhus eller i anslutning till andra, riktiga blommor och blad. Gärna i ett vardagsrum eller annan plats inomhus där en kan förvänta sig en passionsfruktskrukväxt. Det ska vara ljus i rummet, som om det vore mitt på dagen.

3. Framtida performances

Hur tycker du att överförningen av information om hur den performativa akten skall utföras till den person som skall utföra den i framtiden skall gå till? (Exempel är skrivna instruktioner, muntlig kommunikation, dokumentationsfilm eller bilder, kombinationer av flera olika sätt osv.)

Alla nämnda sätt är bra.

4. Ballong och Boll.

Just nu finns en vit pilatesboll inuti den gröna "tygpåsen" som utgör fruktämnet. Du pratade om en ballong under intervjun, vad är det för en typ av ballong? Vad har bollen samt ballongen för olika funktioner för verket och vid vilka tidpunkter skall de närvara?

Ballongen används under performancet. https://www.partykungen.se/jatteballong-vit.html?gclid=Cj0KCQjwhZr1BRCLARIsALjRVQPoQPJ2ZT5Kflygym5niv1z4qW15s9Z4egZmBZYn9MdzqQFE1aaC0aAmqNEALw_wcB

<-Den här typen av ballong med klämma för ihopsättning. Pilatesbollen blir för tung att ha på huvudet under performancet. Bollen håller luften och formen bättre än ballongen och används när passionsblomman står utställd som skulptur. Bollen vilar då på pappröret inne i pistillen som håller den uppe istället för min kropp. Pappröret finns med, eller?

5. Sugrör och Läsk

Finns det några riktlinjer för hur sugrören och läsk? Hur de skall se ut, vilken sort och hur mycket behövs?

Jag burkar använda 3 st 1,5 liters flaskor passionsfruktsläsk av den sort som är vanlig där performancet görs. Det är viktigt att publiken ser flaskornas etikett och att korken skruvas av för första gången under performancet, så att de vågar smaka. Finns inte passionsfrukt så går det bra med någon annan "tropisk" smak. Sugrören ska vara vita och ca 50 cm långa. Jag har tejpat ihop två vanliga kortare sugrör eftersom jag inte hade råd att specialbeställa. Det bästa vore att ha vita papperssugrör, 50 cm långa.

Appendix 2. Communication with Informants

Communication with informant 1 & 2.

Informant 1. Matilda Olof Ors. Intendent.

**Frågor ställda per email/ Intendent Matilda Olof Ors
Korrespondens 20-04-20
mellan Mira dolk Flodin och Matilda Olof Ors**

1. Vad är din läsning av verket?

Jag läser verket mot frågor och ämnen som konstnären återkommit till under stora delar av hennes produktion: relationen och samspelet mellan människan, djur och växter. Ett intresse som kanske inte främst är riktat mot naturen isig, utan snarare vår syn på det vi kallar natur, och hur vi förhåller oss till den. Ingela Ihrmans metod att låna former från naturen och bokstavligen ikläda sig dessa ser jag som ett sätt att utforska såväl den tillfälligt tagna rollen, som blicken som riktas mot henne i performancesituationen. På så sätt tycker jag att hennes verk adresserar såväl frågor kring identitet och normkritik.

2. Varför var verket intressant att förvärva?

Ingela Ihrman har under flera år byggt upp en kropp av intressanta verk och hennes konstnärskap hade diskuterats för förvärv under en tid. Då möjlighet till förvärv uppstod togs kontakt med konstnären och beslutet att förvärva just detta verk var något som växte fram i diskussion med henne. Jag är väldigt glad över att det blev just detta verk som jag tycker rör sig i gränlandet mellan skulptur och performance och därmed på många sätt är signifikant för konstnärens produktion. Det är även intressant att se verket i relation till performancetraditionen och andra verk i samlingen där närvaron och utforskandet av den fysiska kroppen spelat en stor roll. Verket adresserar även viktiga frågor kring museets ansvar att även samla på performativa verk med de utmaningar som detta ibland innebär.

3. Vad ser du för relation mellan den materiella komponenten som utgörs av själva passionsblomman och den performativa aktionen?

Relationen mellan materialet – verket som skulptur, och handlingen – verket som performance är väldigt intressant. I samtal med konstnären inför förvärvet vad denna aspekt något vi diskuterade – att verket kan visas som performance och även som en skulptur. Även frågor kring vem som kan utföra den performativa handlingen berördes, men detta är något som vi ska fortsätta prata med konstnären om.

Informant 2. Ulrika Wedin.

**Frågor ställda per email/ Ulrika Wedin
Korrespondens 20-04-22
mellan Mira dolk Flodin och Ulrika Wedin**

Skulle du vilja återge, i korthet vad du fick hjälpa konstnären med?

Jag och Helena Åberg, intendent på Förmedling, träffade konstnären/Ingela I tidigare under veckan och gick igenom alla detaljer och repeterade praktiskt med henne.

Dels gick vi igenom hur Passionsblomman är uppbyggd i sina beståndsdelar. Vi fick prova att lyfta i och ur pappröret som finns under när hon inte utför själva performancen. Jag fick prova att byta ut bollen i blomknoppen mot ballongen och vice versa. Bollen fylls på med tryckluft och behöver tömmas när den ska bytas mot ballongen som konstnären/Ingela använder under själva performancen. Därefter hjälpte vi henne i blomman och placerad flaskorna med passionsläsken innanför stjälken, tror det var 3 stycken 1 1/2 liters "Passionsläsk". Därefter packade vi in blomman, först stänglarna och därefter kronblad och foderblad och till sist spände vi den blå spännremmen så att konstnären/Ingela kunde lirka upp den inifrån blomman.

När så skett och bladen och stänglarna fällts ut, arrangerade vi dem så det låg fint, i enlighet med de instruktioner konstnären/Ingela visat oss.

Under själva performancen, informerade vi publiken inte kliva på bladen och röra sig försiktigt kring Passionsblomman. Det var ganska mycket folk, 50-70 personer skulle jag uppskatta det till.

När så konstnären/Ingela började hälla ut läsken som luktar starkt och sött började Helena dela ut de hoptejpade sugrören som medvetet såg "lite nasty" ut som konstnären/Ingela sa. Så snart besökarna stor som liten, gammal som ung börjades sugandet och sörplandes av nektar!

När så slutligen performancen gav konstnären/Ingela tecken och jag hjälpte henne ur stjälken.

Konstnären/Ingela lämnade och jag och Helena monterade i pappröret la på blomknoppen (som ännu hade ballongen i) och stängde Passionsblomman och fäste slutligen den blå spännremmen.

Jag undrar även vad Din upplevelse av publiken under performancet var?

Det var väldigt vackert men också lekfullt, knasigt, skört och sublimt och på samma gång lite grisigt och en aning snuskigt, på ett härligt sätt. Det var på det hela taget väldigt generöst och inbjudande! Stämningen var nyfiken och något uppsluppen. Jag minns särskilt ett barn, passande klädd som en rosa älva med paljetter som inte kunde få nog och som till slut bokstavligen och under högljudda protester lyftes bort av sin pappa.

Det var fint att sedan se Passionsblomman och prata med besökare under utställningsperioden både som värd och visare och veta vad som dolde sig innanför...

Bästa hälsningar Ulrika

Appendix 3. Instructions for assistance

APPENDIX 3.

Instructions from the artist to assistants that was given before the performance that were held during the exhibition “With the Future Behind Us” at the museum of Modern Art in Stockholm 2018.

Samling 12.30

Ta pistillen (med ballong i) från slussen
Öppna knoppen tillsammans
Ta ur pappröret, ställa det i slussen
Lägga 3 flaskor läsk i blomman (flaskorna står i slussen)
Hjälpa Ingela in i blomman
Stänga knoppen och fästa spännbandet

13.00

Ha överblick om jag behöver hjälp
Se till att folk inte sitter närmre än 2 meter från blomman
När den öppnat sig hjälpa till att ordna fransarna och kronbladen jämnt
När jag hållt en och en halv flaska börja dela ut sugrör
Hjälpa mig ur blomman om det behövs

13.30

Ös ur och torka upp läsk från blomman noga
Hämta pappröret från slussen
Montera röret och pistillen i blomman

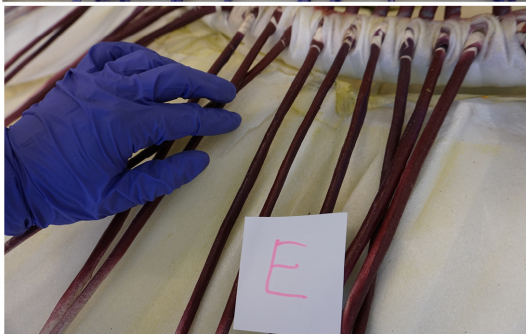
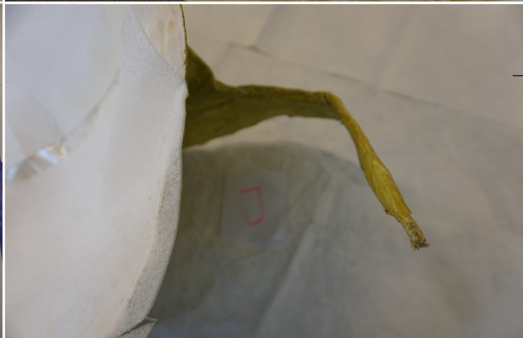
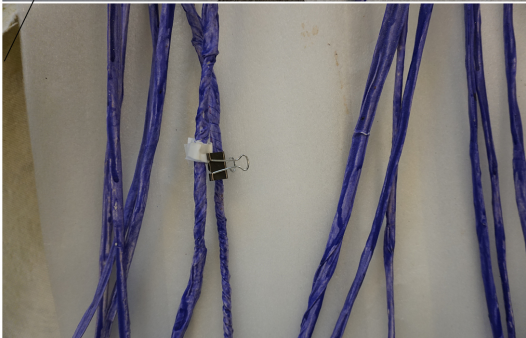
Appendix 4. Documentation of Damages of the Costume

Documentation of damages on the costume. Documentation was made during the dates 2020-04-16, 2020-04-17 and 2020-04-21.

A. Ovary & Pistil



C. Sepal, Petals Operculum, Corona Filament and Honey Gland



D. Base

